

THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

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LANGUAGE IN THE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

DORA V. SMITH

COMMON-SENSE IN GRAMMAR TEACHING

WALTER V. KAULFERS

BUILDING UNITY IN DETROIT

MARION V. EDMAN

THE SPRING CHILDREN'S BOOKS

AGATHA SHEA AND STAFF

A SOFT ANSWER

MABEL F. RICE

THE UNITED NATIONS ON DISPLAY

HELEN SATTLEY

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The Language Arts in the Life of the School'

DORA V. SMITH²

The modern program in language pervades the life and work of the school. The five hundred teachers who swarmed the halls of the Rollins Demonstration School of Kansas City, Missouri Teachers College one Saturday morning in April were convinced of that fact.

Out of the Abundance of the Heart

Easter had come to the kindergarten. A month before, the children had begun to build their church. The altar rail, the wooden block pews, and the colored glass windows kept

¹This article belongs not to the writer, but to the directors of instruction in the Kansas City, Missouri, schools and to the teachers and pupils of Rollins Demonstration School, in whose significant program for the in-service training of teachers, the writer recently was privileged to have a part. Dean J. C. Bond directed the program, assisted by Alice Cusack and Barbara Henderson, supervisors in the Kansas City schools. Through the kindness of Miss Lena Bumbarger, principal of the Rollins School, the demonstration materials were made available. Thanks are due to the Demonstration Staff: Mrs. Gladys Amos, Mrs. Bertha Barron, Marian Brewster, Norah Bury, Jane Hadden, Mrs. Vane Jones, Mary Caroline Keenan, Mary Meehan, Anne Morgan, Elizabeth Morris, Virginia Renshaw, and Mrs. Marylane Thorne. Teachers of Pinkerton and Border Star Schools are also mentioned in the article. Minnesota references are to the work of Edna Peterson of the Franklin School in Anoka and to that of Ethel Tschumperlin of the McKinley School and Ruby Dahlin of the Tuttle School, both of Minneapolis.

—D. V. S.

many of them busy during art and workshop periods. Then came the Easter Parade. Such bonnets and hats as the children made would have graced Fifth Avenue—the boys' strictly military in design, the girls' wholly frivolous.

Language helped in the plans, and language made possible the service. Reading of Easter stories and poems set the spirit of the occasion. The children recited two passages from the Psalms. They sang Easter songs with original words and music:

²Dr. Smith is professor of education at the University of Minnesota, past president of the National Council of Teachers of English, and chairman of the Council's Elementary Section Committee.

Kindergarteners Going to Church at Easter



"Springtime, springtime,
Spring is coming today.
Springtime, springtime,
Now we can go out to play."

This one had the sound of belfry music in it:

"Church bells ring,
As we sing,
Ding! Dong! Ding!"

Finally they offered an original prayer:

"We thank Thee for this Easter Time,
Dear God, we thank Thee."

Other kindergarten rooms in Kansas City blossomed with Easter flowers and were alive with Easter bunnies and chicks made by the children. First attempts at facing an audience were evident in the group of tiny children in Border Star School who concealed themselves behind a puppet stage and bobbed up to show their clay chickens as they recited an appropriate poem from Louise Abney's *Choral Speaking Arrangements for Lower Grades*.

The first grade in Rollins School had finished making kites. On their long walk to fly their kites the children observed evidences of spring which became the basis for their language and reading work for some time. During the demonstration lesson they composed a letter to their former teacher:

Rollins School
Kansas City, Missouri
April 1, 1944

Dear Mrs. Roberts:

We are making kites. Some time we are going to fly our kites. We bought kites

Seven and Eight-year-olds, dramatizing *Peter and The Wolf*

from the store, but now we are making our own. We went out on the back school yard to fly our kites. The kites went up and down. The kites went up high.

One day we went for a walk. We saw some robins hopping, hopping along. The wind blew and blew. It blew our hair. It blew our hats. It blew our coats. It blew the girls' dresses. We went to the park to find a place to fly our kites.

We would like for you to come to visit us.

Love,
Boys and Girls of Room 2

When Mrs. Roberts came, she was to be greeted with the surprise of a new original song:

"The kites are gently flying,
Flying, flying.
The kites are gently flying,
Flying in the air."

It was heartening to find the normal delights of children and their joy in nature and the out-of-doors sharing with the social studies as a background for their speaking, writing, and reading.

The day before, a class of fourth grade children in Kansas City had broadcast from a local radio station a program on the birds returning with the spring. A group, listening in at Pinkerton School, made notes and discussed the habits of the birds presented on the program. Dictionaries proved necessary as the names of the birds were put on the blackboard, *tanager* being a special stumbling block. Earlier in the week, these children had put up a birdhouse on the school grounds and had planned a program of bird calls appropriate for the occasion.

Seventh grade boys in the Border Star School developed a remarkable series of talks on the physics of streamlining airplanes. Their vocabularies in that area would have put to shame those of many of their elders. Activities carried on in this unit were stimulated by



the new *Syllabus for a Collegiate Course in Aviation for Elementary School Teachers* released in March by the Civil Aeronautics Administration. A valuable bibliography of readings is contained in the bulletin.

Coming back to Rollins School and its Saturday morning demonstrations, we find that dramatizations were engaging the attention of the second and third grades and the fifth.

The younger children were enjoying *Peter and the Wolf* with recordings and with orchestral accompaniments by upper grade pupils. Particular emphasis was given to the appropriateness of each tune and each instrument to portray the various characters. Not satisfied with merely acting out the rhythms, the children attempted to express their feeling for them in words:

Peter's tune—is happy skips gaily is full of
fun is jolly like a little boy
The Duck's tune—waddles and swims
The Wolf's tune—growsl is fierce and scary
The Bird's tune—flies up and down twitters
flits round and round
Grandfather's tune—hobbles thumps along
The Cat's tune—is prowling is slinky
The Hunter's tune—is noisy with shooting
is full of crashes and bangs

Early efforts at dramatization revealed the need for selecting those parts most vital to the story and offering the greatest opportunities for rhythmical interpretation. The mural of the triumphant procession to the zoo, which can be seen in the background of the picture, embodies the gay spirit of the story.

It was *The Five Hundred Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* which engrossed the fifth grade class. After reading the story aloud once for sheer pleasure, the teacher then reread it while the children listened for possible scenes into which it could be divided. The following outline resulted:



Six and Seven year-olds Enjoying Books

- Scene I—Bartholomew Meets the King
- Scene II—Adventures in the Throne Room
- Scene III—Sir Wilfred's Surprise
- Scene IV—The Executioner's Dungeon
- Scene V—The King's New Hat

The visitors saw the children divide into three groups, plan the action for Scene I, choose the characters, seek costumes and properties in the cloak room, and present their performance to the class as a whole. The evaluation, resulting in the choice of the best scene, showed how carefully standards had been developed in previous experiences of the same kind.

Language is essentially a social instrument. Part of the program of instruction is therefore concerned with the development in children of a sense of personal responsibility for social participation. The language work of the third grade had been centered for some time upon plans for an April Fool Party given in the gymnasium that morning for a group of children their own age in a neighboring school. Invitations had been written, committees appointed, and a program of entertainment agreed upon. Favors and lollipops had been made by the children.

Plans for necessary preparations were outlined on the blackboard.

1. Invite guests
2. Make invitations
3. Make favors
4. Play games
5. Serve refreshments

Next was a list of committees: (1) host and hostess, (2) decoration, (3) program, (4) refreshments, and (5) favors, indicating that learning to discuss and plan co-operatively in small groups had not been neglected.

After considerable class discussion, the following program was agreed upon:

1. Greet and become acquainted with our guests
2. Explain the April Fool game
3. Play the April Fool game
4. Explain the Signs of April game
5. Play the Signs of April game
6. Explain the Duck Relay
7. Play the Duck Relay
8. Teach the Polka
9. Dance the Polka
10. Entertain our guests with the Minuet Dance
11. Serve refreshments
12. Give favors

The explanations of the games gave practice in clarity and organization of presentation, and the child most successful in each case was chosen to make the explanation the day of the party. Then, guests must be graciously received. Each child played host or hostess to a particular guest, who had to be introduced to classmates in the neighboring school. The wealth of opportunity for motivated language instruction in this situation

Eight-year-olds Greeting Guests at Party



was apparent in the unit from beginning to end.

Reading books and literature played a part in the demonstration program in both primary and intermediate grades. Throughout the year, the children in the first and second grades had gone on a trip to the library every second week. Attractive displays by the librarian of books suited to six and seven-year-olds did much to promote the consistent reading of good books. On the day of the demonstration the children dramatized different stories they had read, gave riddles concerning the characters in books, and told parts of stories by the aid of pictures on the flannel board. Peep shows of Mother Goose rhymes decorated a nearby room. "If you can guess them," the children said, "they're good peep shows."

The middle grades are the time for *Alice in Wonderland*, Miss Renshaw's class decided. A surprising number of pupils in the fourth and fifth grades had never known the fun of sliding down the rabbit hole and drinking the fateful liquid with Alice. Consequently, they secured several editions of the book varying in difficulty with the reading abilities of the pupils in the class. After everyone had finished reading the story, the children skimmed it for scenes and choice passages of conversation to read aloud and use for dramatization.

Squeaks from the direction of the fourth grade room told that even rats may have something to do with language. The fathers of many of the children had recently been called for physical examinations. This fact had led to an interesting discussion of good health and its relationship to foods and nutrition. Feeding different diets to a group of white rats, the children weighed them each morning and noted any nervous habits and restlessness developing among those that were on deficient diets. Oral discussion showed a marked growth in the children's vocabularies.

Individual diaries of the experiment offered an opportunity for the writing of daily paragraphs. Words previously learned in spelling had to be reviewed because they had fallen into disuse. Many new words also had to be mastered.

The contrast between repetitive dull reports and those in which more descriptive, colorful words were used became daily more apparent. Some children personalized the rats, writing as if the animals had told them how they felt about such an experiment. Each child read his paragraph aloud to the class. Courteous, constructive methods of criticism were developed, and the whole experiment proved a valuable experience in language as well as in science. Much informative reading was done in the field of foods, and use of indexes, tables of contents, and the like was stimulated.

Reading of current newspapers and magazines in the seventh grade was focussed on the necessity of being intelligent about what is going on in the world. During the term, discussion developed concerning the distinction among news, propaganda, and mere scandal. Films and interviews spurred interest in events and places. Listening to regular news broadcasts and reading the newspaper daily became part of the children's home and school tasks.

Finally, the war fronts became so active that World Discussion three times a week no longer sufficed to cover the events. Committees were formed to specialize in the news of a given area. Children selected the areas which had most personal interest for them. The committees met daily, sorted their findings, and selected the best method of presenting the news to the class. Sometimes it was by class discussion, sometimes by round table or quiz, sometimes by individual reports, and sometimes by films. The language



Enjoying Good Radio Music

outcomes noted by both teacher and pupils were these:

1. Nearly all the pupils now listen to regular news broadcasts and read the daily papers.
2. They have a pride in good vocabularies.
3. They show a growing desire to use correct English.
4. They give and receive criticisms and suggestions in a more friendly manner.
5. They have improved in reporting information, both in the choice of material to be given and in the manner of reporting.
6. They show much improvement in speaking clearly and comfortably before the group.

Learning from a film requires preparation in what to look for and how to listen. The sixth grade, in connection with its study of the British Isles, became interested in wartime London and how the British were meeting the emergency. Their demonstration lesson showed preparing for, seeing, and discussing a short O.W.I. film on the work of the London police during an air raid. Before the film was shown, the children agreed upon the following outline of topics on which they hoped to secure information:

The Work of the London Police

- I. Training
- II. Duties

- a. Before the blitz
- b. During the air raid

III. Kinds of Police

Question: What made it possible for the police to meet emergencies so calmly and efficiently?

Discussion afterward followed the outline rather closely. In the end, one boy summarized the findings this way: "The London police are able to meet emergencies in air raids calmly and efficiently because of their precise training and co-operation. The kinds of police are those who go on foot, those who are mounted, and those who ride bicycles, motorcycles, cars, and river launches."

Finally, the sixth and seventh grades presented the culmination of a unit on enjoying good radio music. After a survey of current listening interests in which only two children were found tuning in on good musical programs, the class began listing the offerings presented over local and national hook-ups. They watched newspapers and magazines for items and pictures of interest. They made posters to encourage listening to specific programs; they wrote letters requesting advanced program listings and photographs of artists they had enjoyed; they wrote "thank you" letters in return; they discussed and evaluated programs; and they prepared radio guides which were mimeographed for use in listening and in writing reports. A page entry for each program furnished space for written reviews. Lists of the time, station, and sponsor of the best programs fostered listening at home, for practically all of the programs came outside of school hours. A list of operas to watch for also appeared in the radio guide, and lists of violinists, pianists, composers, and singers to be checked off when heard. These lists also furnished help with spelling and pronunciation, so that children to whom such names were hopelessly confusing came to be able to recognize and record them when

they were mentioned by the announcer over the radio, given on request over the telephone, or spoken of by other children in class.

Centuries ago a great teacher taught a significant truth about expression: "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." No one who had the privilege of observing this series of demonstration lessons in the most vital in-service training program for teachers of which the writer has knowledge can fail to recognize the truth of that principle. Five hundred teachers who voluntarily gave up Saturday morning to attend the session came away inspired by a vision of language related to every experience of the child's day. *Language as a tool* was there. Children read, outlined, planned, wrote letters, all to good purpose in real situations in the school room. *Language in its own right* was there because of the rich resources it offers quite apart from connection with any other subject, as the fun of playing *Peter and the Wolf*, grabbing hats off the head of poor Bartholomew Cubbins, and shifting chairs at the Mad Hatter's Tea Party clearly showed. Expression, too, was sometimes about the simple joys of childhood, which do not correlate with anything but the normal processes of growing up in a world where new babies arrive to bring joy to the home, where puppy dogs bark and chase their tails, where daddies frolic with their children and then march off to war, and where Easter comes even to a darkened world.

Language is spoken *to* someone. It cements or destroys human relationships. The party in the third grade revealed children learning by experience how to be friendly through courteous use of words, through assuming personal responsibility for social participation. The newspaper, the radio, and the motion picture are now a fundamental part of a great network of communication which extends

around the world. Adequate use of these media is a challenge even to the most highly educated. It is obvious that the modern program in the language arts cannot escape responsibility for training children in the use of them.

The Place of the Mechanics of English

The completeness, the perspective, and the balance of the view of the language arts presented in this program is stimulating beyond words. Only one thing could not be adequately revealed in such culminating activities. That is the place of the mechanics of English in the program of the language arts. Skills are tremendously important. Failure in the most essential of them handicaps a child for life. Illiteracy in a democracy spells the doom of what we have been pleased to call the American way of life.

Throughout the course of enterprises such as these, teachers discover the weaknesses of individuals and of the class as a whole. They set aside language time for a direct attack upon needed skills. Sometimes such matters as writing complete sentences, recognizing the difference between *was* and *were*, or taking notes on material bearing upon a specific topic need attention by the class as a whole. Sometimes small groups require help with the use of the apostrophe, the order of letters in the alphabet, the recognition of words in reading. Often individual pupils must practice writing words frequently mis-spelled, or drill orally on verb forms confused or misused.

Recently in Minneapolis, a third grade class studying pioneer life had on the blackboard a list called "Words We Need in Our Unit." These words were studied by the children in groups according to the difficulties they had had in spelling them. The teacher went through the usual procedure of helping them *see* the words, *hear* the words, and *write* the words, the *meaning* of which had already

been developed through use in the unit. When asked if she had a regular city spelling list she was required to cover, the teacher responded that she had, that although she did all her teaching of spelling in relationship to activities in progress in her classroom, she checked carefully against the city spelling books to see that all the basic words were covered at some time during the year. In other words, far from ignoring the importance of skills and the evidence of research as to which of them have the greatest functional value in life today, the program demonstrated at Rollins School *makes both a direct and an indirect attack upon them in relationship to use in enterprises which have social value for the children.*

Another question that arises in connection with such a series of lessons is whether these activities can be carried on in small towns as well as in large cities or with less highly favored children as well as with superior ones. The answer is an unqualified "yes". With the exception of the use of the motion picture, the kinds of activities presented here are equally suited to the rural and to the city children, to schools with much equipment and to schools with little equipment. The more limited the background and ability of the children, the more important such enriching experiences become. Recently in a small school in Anoka, Minnesota, rural children in the first grade without previous kindergarten experience proved too timid to express themselves in the presence of others. What finally unloosed their tongues was the arrival of a pet rabbit in a box. A series of pictures of Minnesota animals aroused latent interest in the beaver and the otter. Soon a unit was under way. Stories and poems about animals were found in odds and ends of readers available in addition to the basic books. Song books contributed music about bunnies and other animals. Soon the problem was not to

Common-Sense in the Teaching of Grammar

WALTER V. KAULFERS¹

Teachers of English are employed to do something about their pupils' use of English. If their charges say, "He never done nothing," or write unintelligible sentences, it is expected that they will do something about it. But how? That is the question which still perplexes many conscientious teachers, and continues to fuel controversies concerning methodology in the teaching of English usage. The discussion of specific methods contained in the present paper is founded upon the following hypothesis: *Departures from accepted usage are symptoms of a very limited and underprivileged language environment outside the school, wherefore no program of instruction is likely to prove highly successful in improving the pupils' own personal use of language unless it first of all makes provision for a fundamental enrichment of language experience with opportunities to hear good English, and for audience situations that will serve as incentives to learn to speak and write effectively.*

Certainly the pupil is not likely to find much incentive to change his language if his English is perfectly acceptable to all whom he meets outside school. Unless all teachers cooperate very closely with the English class throughout the day, much of the language teacher's work will not greatly improve the pupil's own speech habits either in school or outside of it.

The hypothesis stated above obviously points to a solution: The school must provide learning environments that at least simulate or reproduce life-situations in which

good English is recognized by the pupil as being the most appropriate form of expression for the occasion. This, of course, is far more easily said than done, but it is by no means impossible.

Among the devices that teachers have found effective in providing opportunities for realistic practice is the dramatization of life-situations;² for example, semi-formal conversation at dinner, over the phone, or on social visits; common business transactions; social introductions; thank-you notes, notes of regret or condolence, informal social invitations; informal discussion of current events, hobbies, movies, etc. As far as possible, these activities should lead to actual performance in a real life situation. The specific occasions for actual performance will vary from school to school, but usually they can be found in such activities as serving as hosts to another class, to parents, or to a committee from a neighboring school; correspondence with young people of like age in other parts of the state or nation; sending for materials to illustrate individual or group projects; writing letters of condolence to sick classmates, or letters of appreciation to screen, radio, and concert performers; inviting, presenting, and interviewing visitors to the class on topics of common interest; and discussion of hobbies or favorite books. Such activities obviously provide for practice not only in

¹Stanford University, California.

²For vivid, detailed descriptions of practical public school programs in action, see Stanford Language Arts Investigation. *English for Social Living and Foreign Languages and Cultures in American Education*, McGraw Hill Book Co., New York, 1942-1943.

language, but also in good taste, tact, and manners, and for the development of confidence and poise in social relations.

During spontaneous class dramatizations of common life situations in which standard usage is the most suitable, the teacher will carefully note speech habits and manners that are incongruous. Suggestions for improvement should be solicited from the pupils themselves by way of leading questions, and the dramatizations repeated in more acceptable form. Failure of the class to suggest improvements will almost invariably be indicative of very limited linguistic experience. In such cases, young people can hardly be expected to lift themselves by their bootstraps. Provision of suitable models through play-readings, talking pictures, and direct observation on excursions then becomes essential.

Usually the teacher will observe that certain usages are definitely unacceptable. Some of these will be common to a large majority of the class; others will be purely individual. The difficulties common to a majority of the group can be incorporated in different types of practice exercises, composed exclusively of sentences quoted verbatim from the oral and written work of the class. For example:

Teacher: "Many people would think that the sentences on the board would be in poor taste if used in school, business, or public places. The trouble lies in the *italicized* words. Can you improve the sentences by using words from the column to the left in their places?"

(On the board)

- | | |
|----------|--|
| anything | 1. He <i>sung</i> very good. |
| have | 2. I don't know <i>nothing</i> about it. |
| saw | 3. He <i>ain't</i> told me yet. |
| sang | 4. I must <i>of</i> lost it. |
| hasn't | 5. We <i>seen</i> him do it. |
| well | |

The teacher then solicits improvements from volunteers in the class. In some cases,

no one pupil will be able to rephrase the entire sentence by himself. Occasionally, the teacher may have to suggest the improvement. Where this is necessary, a word of explanation may be required. For example, in changing *sung* to *sang* (in sentence number one) she may add:

"*Sung* is ordinarily used only after *has*, *have*, *had*, *having*, or after *is*, *are*, *was*, *were*, *be*, *being*, or *been*, as in 'He *has sung*' or 'The Star Spangled Banner *was sung*.' In nearly all other cases we say *sang* instead of *sung*. Which, then, would you choose in these sentences? (The teacher reads a few multiple-choice exercises to test the degree of insight established)

We (*sang*, *sung*) some songs.

We have never (*sung*, *sang*) it before."

If the class has difficulty making the choices, the teacher may write on the board the following "reminder," since it covers practically all cases involving confusion in the use of past participles and past tense forms, and will be useful in many other connections.

After	<i>have</i>	we use (the past participles)	<i>sung</i> ;
	<i>has</i>		<i>seen</i>
	<i>had</i>		<i>run</i>
	<i>having</i>		<i>taken</i>
	<i>is</i>		<i>done</i>
	<i>are</i>		<i>swum</i>
	<i>was</i>		<i>written</i>
	<i>were</i>		<i>gone</i>
	<i>be</i>		<i>come</i>
	<i>being</i>		
	<i>been</i>		
		otherwise, we generally use (the past tense) instead.	<i>sang</i>
			<i>saw</i>
			<i>ran</i>
			<i>took</i>
			<i>did</i>
			<i>swam</i>
			<i>wrote</i>
			<i>went</i>
			<i>came</i>

The grammatical labels in parentheses should be omitted if the teacher has good reason to suspect that they will merely get in the way of real learning, or sidetrack the class work into abstract theorizing about the

meanings of labels. The terminology can be introduced by way of summary or review *after* the important objective in the teaching of English usage—improvement in the pupil's own personal command of language—has been achieved. The "reminder," if copied into a notebook, can serve as a kind of illustrated definition of the term "past participle," should an acquaintance with grammatical terminology seem desirable just for its cultural value.

In the case of exercise number *two*, the teacher may conclude, "Yes; 'I don't know *anything* about it' is in better taste. After *not*, *-n't*, *hardly*, *never*, *none*, *nobody*, *nothing*, we generally say *anything* instead of *nothing*." If the difficulty recurs in later work, the teacher may write the explanation on the board as a "reminder" and ask the pupils to make a copy in their notebook, should mimeographed copies be unavailable.

Negatives vs. Positives

After	<i>not (n't)</i>	we generally say	<i>anything</i>
	<i>never</i>		<i>anybody</i>
	<i>nobody</i>		<i>anyhow</i>
	<i>hardly</i>		<i>anyway</i>
	<i>no (ne)</i>		<i>anywhere</i>
	<i>nothing</i>		<i>ever</i>

As before, exercises consisting of sentences lifted from the pupils' own oral or written work may be used for supplementary practice where necessary. For variety, these may be recast into different types of easily scorable forms: multiple-choice, true-false correction, completion, etc. Workbooks containing ready-made exercises are usually of value only if the language problems treated are the same as those of the class *at its own particular stage of development*, and phrased in language that the pupils themselves easily recognize as being typical of their own. Otherwise, the transfer of training to the pupil's *own personal use* of language will probably be slight indeed.

Neither workbook exercises nor teacher-

made exercises, however, ordinarily suffice to produce lasting improvements. Wherever specialized practice on a point of usage seems urgent, the teacher may supplement work of the type already described by asking the pupils to write illustrations of their own. For example, after the class has gained some insight into the use of the past participle and past tense, the teacher may say: "Now let's see if each of us can write a short sentence to show how to use the words *done*, *seen*, *saw*, *come*, *came*." The illustrative sentences can then be presented to the class for group discussion and evaluation.

Since pupil participation in self-evaluation is often an effective aid to self-improvement in English usage, each pupil may be provided with a folder in which written work that has been checked for difficulties can be kept.³ During occasional workshop periods, the folders may be removed from the filing-case, and the papers re-worked individually with the help of the teacher and of an editorial committee chosen from among the abler pupils in the class. By means of a simple check-list, young people can often be interested in keeping track of the number of difficulties that they encounter per 100 words written, and to chart their individual improvement over a period of time. If each "slip" is treated as a difficulty to be overcome, rather than as a violation to be punished, the pupil can be encouraged to learn from his mistakes (as most intelligent people do), and thus prevented from becoming discouraged or frustrated by them.

During the year, formal grammatical terminology should be used only where it is definitely convenient as a *label* for the subsequent identification of language elements

³A practical program for pupil participation in self-evaluation is described in concrete detail with a sample guide-sheet and self-evaluation checklist in the writer's *Modern Languages for Modern Schools*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1942, pp. 406-412.

that the pupils have already learned to use with some feeling of security. Obviously, no language has ever been acquired, much less improved, merely by assigning academic labels to words. Neither do the labels themselves adhere well unless there is already something in the learner's experience to which they can be attached.⁴ The function of grammatical terms, like that of all labels, is merely to serve as a convenient means of *subsequent identification*, and *not to conceal the contents*.

Whenever instruction in language, native or foreign, starts with the definitions of labels rather than with active experience in using it under tactful motivation and guidance, it inevitably degenerates into the erudite shovel-earning and academic leaf-raking that characterizes so much pretentious busywork in the teaching of the language arts. Whatever the value of formal grammar may be to adult specialists in comparative linguistics, morphology, etymology, philology, or lexicography, the fact remains that no scientific study of the many available in English and the foreign languages⁵ has shown that sentence analysis, diagramming, parsing, or nomenclature-drill is of the slightest benefit in improving a person's own personal use of language. Instead, the chief result of such methods has often been a strong dislike of language work,

⁴Harold Benjamin in *The Phi Delta Kappan* for November, 1941.

⁵To mention but a few: Harl R. Douglass and Clifford Kittelson, "The Transfer of Training in High School Latin to English Grammar, Spelling, and Vocabulary," *Journal of Experimental Education*, Vol. IV, pp. 26-33, September, 1935. Joseph E. Barber, "Finds English Grammar of No Benefit to Pupils of Foreign Language," *Nation's Schools*, Vol. XVII, p. 23, January, 1936. T. H. Briggs, "Formal English Grammar as a Discipline," *Teachers College Record*, Vol. XIV, pp. 251-343, September, 1913. L. J. O'Rourke, "Rebuilding the English-usage Curriculum to Insure Greater Mastery of Essentials: A Report of a Nationwide Survey," The Psychological Institute, Washington, D. C., 1934. Arthur Ackerman, "Reading Before Grammar: An Experiment," *High Points*, pp. 31-38, May, 1939. J. C. Greenup and David Segel, "An Experimental Study of the Relation Between Method and Outcomes in Spanish Instruction," *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol. XIV, pp. 208-212, December, 1929.

anti-social self-consciousness in oral and written expression, or complete frustration.

It is significant to note that those who question these established facts have never been able to cite a single objective investigation in support of their contentions. Arguments undocumented by any reference to experimental research would, in most scientific circles, be thrown out as symptoms of *ex cathedra* pretentiousness or dogmatism rather than accepted as evidence of authoritative scholarship.⁶

If language usage cannot be improved through such devices and occasional "reminders" as those discussed above, the difficulty is probably far more a problem for psychology—for help in straight thinking and in making meanings clear to a reader or listener—than for mere grammatical labeling. How, then, can young people be taught to write and recognize complete sentences? Does not ability to write and recognize a complete sentence require a fairly thorough knowledge of grammatical terminology? If formal grammatical methods are used, the amount of terminology required for mastery is indeed considerable. The pupil will not only have to know *subjects* and *predicates* (which in turn depend upon a foreknowledge of *nouns*, *pronouns*, and *verbs*), but he will also have to be able to distinguish *phrases* from *dependent* and *independent* clauses (all of which in turn requires a foreknowledge of *adverbial conjunc-*

⁶The same overbearing dogmatism must be guarded against in determining standards of correctness lacking support in modern research into current English usage among outstanding present-day writers and leaders in the fields of science, philosophy, education, journalism, business, or government. Many distinctions still taught in school are no longer observed outside very narrow academic circles. See especially S. A. Leonard, *Current English Usage*, National Council of Teachers of English, Chicago, Illinois, 1932. Albert H. Marckwardt and Fred Walcott, *Facts About Current English Usage*, D. Appleton-Century Co., Inc., New York, 1938. Charles Carpenter Fries, *American English Grammar*, D. Appleton-Century Co., New York, 1940. Arthur G. Kennedy, *English Usage*. D. Appleton-Century Co., New York, 1942.

tions, relative pronouns, and what not). Before an active command of all these terms is achieved, the teacher is often in real danger of losing both the child and the sentence among the labels.

The insinuation here is by no means that the definitions of *subject*, *predicate*, *dependent clause* or *adverbial phrase* cannot be committed to memory and repeated to perfection, or even illustrated with memorized examples by almost any youngster in the intermediate grades. The point is that no study based on careful experimental research has ever shown that such skill, *even when attained*, makes the slightest contribution to the improvement of the individual's own personal use of language, either native or foreign.⁷ Instead, the records show that formal grammatical explanations in textbooks are more often instruments of frustration than of clarification for people not already skilled by profession in linguistic analysis. The rules are far less comprehensible to young people at times than the 1943 income-tax forms to adults unaccustomed to legalistic mumbojumbo. If the evidence were not so completely and uniformly negative, no one in his right mind would have the effrontery to question a system of language teaching fathered by such holy men as Donatus and Priscian in the early centuries of the Christian era.⁸

In cases involving difficulties in sentence building, the underlying problem is far more psychological than grammatical—that is, the difficulty lies in the pupil's thought processes and mind-set rather than in words considered as things. Close observation alone will suffice

to show that young people seldom have difficulty in using complete sentences when they are talking about something that they know thoroughly and are eager to communicate to an interested listener. In such cases, the sentence problems are few and hardly ever those of fragmentation, but of lack of subordination or of over-loading. All the difficulties common to written work arise, however, when the speaker is insecure in his knowledge of the subject or in the presence of his audience. This observation holds for adults in equal degree.

Does the remedy, then, lie in superimposing an additional means for promoting insecurity through the introduction of an unwieldy abstract set of grammatical labels, or of disciplinary gymnastics in the form of sentence analysis, diagramming, or parsing? Hardly! Common-sense alone should suffice to show that the problem is primarily one of building confidence and security in written work by helping "young people find something interesting and worthwhile to say and building an audience situation that will give them reasons for saying it." Within this frame of reference, "the form of their production is to be thought of only in judging the effectiveness of *what* is said, and to *whom*."⁹ To help young people express themselves on paper as easily as in everyday speech should be the guiding objective underlying all teaching that seeks to develop power and effectiveness in the use of language.

In writing, such ease is often difficult to attain for the very reason that our modern systems of handwriting and spelling are so woefully inefficient that they drag down, interrupt, or clog the train of thought. This condition often contributes to psychological slips of omission in writing that seldom occur in oral speech, and not infrequently to com-

⁷See the references in footnote 4. Also *English for Social Living*, *op. cit.*, pages 274-276.

⁸Aelius Donatus (c. 350 A.D.) tutor of St. Jerome and author of *Ars Grammatica*. Caesariensis Priscianus (c. 500 A.D.) author of *Institutiones Grammaticae*. To see how instruction in formal grammar has been kept almost simon-pure from 350 A.D. to 1944 A.D., see the illustrative footnotes in E. P. Cubberley's *The History of Education*, Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, pp. 156-157.

⁹Holland D. Roberts. "English Teachers Face the Future," *The English Journal*, Vol. XXVII, pp. 101-113, February, 1938.

plete lapses of the verbal memory in writing—of forgetting what one was about to say, or of what one has just finished saying. Mental distraction and frustration produced by inefficiency in the tools of communication themselves are often responsible for such phenomena as sentence fragments in writing. Obviously, little can be done toward reforming the systems at present, except to stop making much needed reforms impossible by imbuing every succeeding generation of citizens with a blind adoration and respect for costly inefficiency in the tools of communication.¹⁰

Where the difficulty is one of overloading or lack of subordination in written sentences, the problem can often be met directly by means similar to those described earlier for the replacement of unacceptable usages. As before, the practice exercises and discussion should capitalize only examples lifted from the pupils' own written work. "How can we change these sentences so as to make them easier to understand without having to read them several times?" "How can we change them to make them more forceful, less straggly, or less 'sing songy'?"—are examples of questions that can unify group thinking and discussion under the teacher's guidance and provide an appropriate occasion for the introduction of readily intelligible models where needed.

In the case of such sentence fragments as "Being too tired to work" or "When I was going home," the difficulty is frequently one of mis-punctuation and can be treated exclusively as such. The procedure need rarely require more than asking the pupil to read his work *aloud*, just as if he were actually speaking to someone, and to watch his inflection and pauses in so doing; or the teacher

¹⁰For the high price paid by society for the perpetuation of inefficiency and distortion in the tools of language, see the concrete, practical illustrations in *Modern Language for Modern Schools*, *op. cit.* pp. 315-327.

may read his work aloud exactly as it is punctuated, and thus enable the pupil to gain insight into the real meaning of the period as a kind of stop-sign to guide the reader's mind.

Occasionally, however, sentence fragments are traceable to the pupil's undeveloped ability to visualize an audience. He simply fails to put down on paper all that he has in mind. He merely takes for granted that the reader will readily understand. Obviously, no definition of a sentence as "a complete thought" will suffice here, for whatever the pupil has written *is* a complete thought in his own mind. Otherwise, he would not write it as such. Visualization of an audience, or better still, writing for a real audience and then trying out the results, is a helpful learning experience in such cases.¹¹ Occasionally, a simple self-test for a completely stated sentence may be helpful, but only when other devices fail. Following is a fairly simple test that will serve all normal purposes:

Ask the pupil to make a *question* out of the sentence fragment by changing the *order* of the word, *including always at least the order of the first word*. If what the pupil originally wrote is incompletely stated, the resulting question will sound awkward or nonsensical. However, if the sentence is completely stated (as is No. 4 below), the resulting question will be acceptable. Try this question test out on the following:

1. On my way to school.
2. While going home.
3. Being a girl.
4. It is one o'clock.
5. When I saw her.

Beyond changing the order of the words (including *always* at least the order of the *first* word) the test permits of absolutely no

¹¹For additional illustrations of "the meaning approach" as applied to sentence building, see Ellen Frogner, "Clarifying Some Facts," *The English Journal*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 653-655, October, 1940, and Stanford Language Arts Investigation, *English for Social Living*, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1943, 366 pages.

other changes except the use of *Do (n't)* or *Did (n't)* and their corresponding verb forms. When the question-test is applied to fragments, the results will readily show up the difficulty. In such cases, the pupil should be asked to *add something to the fragment until it can be changed into a question*. For example:

Fragment: When he was in the gym class.

Sentence: When he was in the gym class,
he hurt his foot.

Test: *Did he hurt his foot when he was in the gym class?*

This question-test will obviously not be understood or mastered at a glance, but it will by no means demand the elaborate and continuous drill in *nouns, verbs, pronouns, subjects, predicates, phrases, clauses, etc.*, that the conventional grammatical methods of sentence building require. Such limited practice as may be needed to help young people learn to apply the test will at least involve language directly, and in a form that can easily be made as interesting as a parlor game.

What, then, is the need for grammatical terminology or formal grammatical procedures? For specialists who earn their living exclusively through work in linguistics, formal grammar is doubtless a valuable tool for purposes of identification and classification; but is labelling, identifying, or classifying words and constructions the real purpose of teaching language, native or foreign, to young people? Is it even necessary for those select few who are planning to take up the study of a foreign language?

The answer in each case is an unqualified and emphatic *no*. Even for young people who are planning to major in a foreign language in school, work in formal grammar is neither necessary nor helpful. Although foreign-language teachers unacquainted with modern methods and developments in educational psychology still fall ready victims, at times, of textbooks, requirements, and pronouncements written by people totally illiterate in the field of modern educational and psychological research as applied to language, their number is on the decrease rather than on the increase.¹² The most formal methodology in foreign languages today is to be found almost exclusively among foreign-born teachers completely without background in professional training, and among teachers so lacking in ability to understand and speak the language that formal grammatical methods are almost a necessity since they make no appreciable demands upon ability actually to perform extemporaneously in the foreign language itself.

Elementary school teachers who provide work in formal grammar merely as a preparation for the study of a foreign language in high school are not contributing to anything significant or promising in modern education, and may at times actually be defeating the major concern of language teaching—that of helping young people grow in confidence, ease, power, and honesty in the effective use of English for worthy life purposes.

¹²For practical illustrations of modern functional procedures in the teaching of foreign languages, see *Modern Languages for Modern Schools*, *op. cit.*; also Paul Bernard Diederich, *The Frequency of Latin Words and Their Endings*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1939, pp. 37-43.

The United Nations On Display

HELEN SATTLEY¹

What does it take to have a series of United Nations displays? One show case. The enthusiasm of children. The guiding spirit of one or more teachers or librarians. And the aid of the many agencies which are ready and eager to cooperate in making all of us aware that united nations may become a glorious experiment.

And what does it profit? The intangible benefits are probably the most important. Perhaps, a recognition, an awareness of a unity which is working for the good of the world as a whole. A realization that other lands than ours have their cultures, are important. The more tangible benefits—those that children gain from working together, planning displays, making maps, posters, pictures, setting up exhibits, taking a pride in their own work. And—if you must be very practical—a wonderfully profitable experience for your school library pamphlet file.

We are having such a series of United Nations displays this semester in the Haven Junior High School, Evanston, Illinois. Although the "guiding spirit" has been the library, these have been home room activities and each room has worked out its own exhibit.

At Haven School, the trick was, first, to find all the United Nations. Can you name them, extemporaneously? Do you even know the exact number? We couldn't. We didn't. By putting together the information from pamphlet material of the United Nations Information Office; ⁽¹⁾ the beautifully illustrated article, "Emblems of the United Nations," in the November, 1943, *Nature Magazine*; the *Popular Science Monthly* display of United Nations' flags in its February, 1944 number, we finally decided that there were thirty-three nations. But it wasn't because all of these

¹Librarian in the Haven School, Evanston, Ill. Last month Miss Sattley wrote on Russia Book Week.



sources agreed on the number. They didn't. Even the United Nations Information Office material, only a few months' old, was not quite up to date. We then made our lists, thirty-three United Nations. And the next day, the papers carried small—oh, so small—articles stating that Columbia had joined and was the thirty-fourth. So, we penciled in Columbia on our mimeographed lists, glad that, because of what the United Nations stood for, we could add a country rather than scratch one.

Recent material, we have learned, may also be obtained from the United States Office of War Information, Washington, D. C. They have some fine mineographed articles on the individual countries, sent free upon request, and a large, 29"x40" poster of the flags of thirty of the nations with the caption, "United Nations Fight for Freedom," also free. The United Nations Information Office has a great deal of material which sells for nominal sums. "The United Nations, Who They Are—What They Are Doing," for example, is five cents. They send monthly press releases free to newspapers, writers, educators, etc. Most of this material is adult, but some of it can be used by children. It is best to send directly for their list of publications.

A "United Nations Discussion Guide" by Vere Micheles Dean may be obtained free from the United States Office of Education, Washington, D. C. as well as other helpful suggestions for films, pamphlets, posters, recordings, etc. The *Readers' Digest* for April, 1944, has decorative Easter Eggs on its cover, one for each of the United Nations, and the key to these is inside the front cover. The *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* is worth consulting for recent magazine articles.

Each of the twenty-three rooms of the junior high school was given a first and second choice from the list of nations. Of course, eight or nine of them chose China or Mexico

or both and our library committee had to ask all but two of these to choose again. It was necessary to explain to these disappointed rooms that the lesser known countries were more of a challenge since there was so much to learn about them, and that it might be more fun to send for pamphlets, posters, etc. and begin hunting in magazines than it would be to bring souvenirs and articles from home. We tried to keep before all of us that very significant statement of Mr. C. C. Ching of the Chinese News Service, speaking of celebrating China Book Week,⁽²⁾ "—modern China cannot be interpreted through displays of mandarin robes, antique China, or silk paintings. These are useful as background materials, but the China which is significant to the world today is a modern country, facing realistically many serious problems which are the outgrowth of violent internal growing pains and contemporary world conditions. It is in these terms that China must be understood by her Western neighbors."

What is true of China is true of many of the countries. For example, the chairman of the Mexican exhibit was a girl who had lived in Mexico City. The room had worked up a beautiful display, handicraft, pottery, Mexican books and sheet music; some one had painted a picture of a typical Mexican girl in native costume; there were photographs of a volcano, of beautiful pastoral scenery. "Nothing modern about Mexico?" the chairman was asked. "No cities as we know them, no modern buildings?" "Of course," she said, "there are beautiful buildings, as modern as any I've ever seen," and there followed a hunt for pictures which depicted modern Mexico and these were displayed along with the rest of the exhibit.

The purpose of the United Nations displays at Haven School has been to bring these nations to the attention of children and teachers and not, mainly, to advertise books.

For some displays, neither library help nor books have been needed. However, many children have found that books and library pictures and pamphlets are indispensable, either in the preparation of the exhibits or in the displays, themselves, or both. Some rooms have made lists of books about their countries and exhibited these. Some teachers have read aloud books about the country, such as Elizabeth Lewis' beautiful book, *When the Typhoon Blows*, the story of the Chinese boy who travels from the coast-line back through interior China to Chungking, pushed onward, always, by the oncoming enemy. It is a book which would give any sixth, seventh, eighth grader—or teacher—an actual history of the war in China, although the plot is, of course, fiction. What better time to read aloud Eric Kelly's *Trumpeter of Krakow*, that story about an earlier invasion of Poland and a book which should be known to more children than it is?

One exhibit case which is in a prominent place in the main hall of the school was chosen as the display case. A sign bearing the words "United Nations Display," and the flags of the thirty-four countries, made by one of the eighth grade boys in the Sketch Club, was placed above it. To one side, in a standard, was put the American flag, and on the other side, on the wall, the colorful poster, "United Nations Fight for Freedom." It was an easy matter for our Sketch Club boy to make flags for the four newest members of the United Nations and paste them beside the others on the poster. For some of the exhibits, maps, posters, and book jackets have been put on the bulletin boards throughout the school. Some weeks, there have been two cases used, since there are the twenty-three classes holding weekly displays and not that many weeks in the semester.

The greater part of the exhibits have come from the boys' and girls' homes, for in a school

this size, many nationalities are represented and traveling families and relatives have brought home souvenirs—one soldier uncle sent a box of sea shells from Australia.

For supplementary and new material, the Book Week numbers of the *American Library Association Bulletins* have been the greatest help of all for the three special weeks the OWI has set aside, this school year, for special attention. These are, British Book Week, October 24-30, in *ALA Bulletin*, October, 1943; China Book Week, March 25-31, in *ALA Bulletin*, January, 1944; Russia Book Week May 1-6, in *ALA Bulletins*, March and April, 1944. What matter that Haven celebrated British Book Week in March? The information was just as important to us then and the British Information Service⁽³⁾ still had a great deal of valuable information to send us, although we did lose out on the scenic posters and the war map.

For the other countries, the lists of "Free and Inexpensive Material" in most numbers of the *ALA Booklist* have been invaluable. Here are found listed the agencies sponsored by the various countries for the dissemination of information. The East and West Association⁽⁴⁾ has pamphlets, lists and bibliographies. It is best to write them directly for information. Also, it has been a help to be on the mailing lists of the Council on Books in Wartime.⁽⁵⁾ Their children's booklists, three of which have already been published, "United Nations," "Young America Helps," and "Follow the Flag," have been a real contribution. Single copies of these are free; 100 copies, \$2.50; 500 copies, \$5.00. The two magazines, *Asia and the Americas* and the *National Geographic* are treasures for pictures and articles.

But the boys and girls, themselves, have made contributions.

For the Norwegian exhibit, a class made many colorful maps and charts of population, produce, industries, etc. These were small and

attractive and proved to be very popular. Pasteboard dolls of some of the countries have been made, in native costume. Large cutouts of a Chinese soldier and a Chinese nurse attracted a great deal of attention. Pictures have been painted and scenery made. The free-hand picture map of China was proudly displayed at the public library the week before China Book Week at Haven. Almost every country has had its own map, made especially for its exhibit. Children, today, seem very map-conscious. Thank goodness.

There are many interesting developments from such a program. The seventh grade class responsible for China asked a young Chinese studying in Chicago to talk at a school assembly. He claimed it would be difficult for him, but he agreed to do it. So, in order to help him feel at ease, the class organized a panel discussion with four members of the class serving with him. But they prepared themselves for weeks ahead of time by reading everything they could find in the library, in school, and at home on China, and they asked the school social science classes to prepare questions which they would like to have answered about that country today.

An eighth grade class began a study of the Union of South Africa, because we found—all, of us, teacher, librarians, pupils—that we knew so little about it.

One room sponsored a school assembly for the showing of the film, "World of Plenty," the Paul Rotha production of the production of food, so uneven in distribution during peacetime, so necessary to have controlled in the war and after-the-war period. This was rented for a small sum from the British Information Services, 360 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago. There are such information services in Washington, D. C., in San Francisco, in Hollywood, in New Orleans, in New York.

Midway through the series of exhibits, at this time of writing, we teachers and librarians at Haven School can say that we feel they have been worthwhile. We have learned a lot. It has been fun for those who have participated. And it really has been quite easy. Of course—when children are enthusiastic.

BOOKS ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS "ONE BOOK FROM SO MANY"

- Frost—Legends of the United Nations. McGraw-Hill, \$2.50
- McEwen—Once upon a Time. Nelson, \$2.00
- Australia, Ross—Greentree Downs. Houghton, \$2.00 (6-8gr.)
- Brazil, Brown—Two Children of Brazil. Lipincott, \$2.00 (5-7gr.)
- Canada, Averill—Voyages of Jacques Cartier. Viking, \$2.00 (5-7gr.)
- China, Lewis—When the Typhoon Blows. Winston, \$2.00 (6gr. and up)
- Costa Rica, Gay—Manuelito of Costa Rica. Messner, \$1.50 (2-4gr.)
- Czechoslovakia, Alger—Jan and his Wonderful Mouth Organ. Harper, \$2.00 (5-6gr.)
- Greece, Blackstone—Wings for Nikias. Putnam, \$2.00 (4-9gr.)
- Guatemala, Goetz—Panchita: a Little Girl of Guatemala. Harcourt, \$2.00 (3-6gr.)
- Haiti, Bontemps—Popo and Fifina. Macmillan, \$1.75 (4-7gr.)
- Honduras, Von Hagen—Pablo of Flower Mountain. Nelson, \$2.00 (4-6gr.)
- India, Mukerji—Gay-neck; the story of a Pigeon. Dutton, \$2.00 (5-9gr.)
- Iran, Singer—Ali Lives in Iran. Holiday, \$1.75 (4-7gr.)
- Iraq, Ratzesberger—Camel Bells, a Boy of Baghdad. Whitman, \$2.00 (4-6gr.)
- Mexico, Baker—Juarez: Hero of Mexico. Vanguard, \$2.50 (7-9gr.)
- Netherlands, DeJong—Dirk's Dog, Bello. Harper, \$2.00 (4-7gr.)

Building Unity Within A Community

MARION EDMAN¹

"Civil War Breaks Out in Detroit." This was the kind of headline which was flashed by newspapers all over the country on June 20 and 21 of last summer to inform their readers that in one community, at least, even the semblance of unity among its people had been destroyed. As the year wore on, from various other communities in different parts of the United States, the same kind of news again and again startled the citizens of a country engaged in a war to guarantee basic human rights to all men everywhere.

It is not intended here to trace the causes of race riots nor to argue whether or not such open conflict may be evidence of the birth pangs of social change which may in itself be desirable in many respects. Agreement is general that all violent action is contrary to the tenets and practices of democracy and that social change should rather come about through the legitimate channels of democratic processes. The various avenues for such democratic action through which desirable social change can be effected are too numerous and too complex for the compass of a single paper. It is the purpose of this discussion to indicate only the program of the public schools of Detroit in aiding the community in its desire to bring about greater understanding and unity among the diverse populations of the city.

That Detroit's problem of assimilation has been great is evidenced by the fact that from 1910 on through 1930, roughly one person in three was foreign born. In 1940, the foreign-born still numbered one-fifth of the total population. The total number of these

foreign-born is not only large, but is comprised of very many diverse groups. A certain amount of friction has always been attendant upon the acculturation of these groups, but these frictions were largely psychological and personal rather than physical and of mass proportion.

World War I brought Detroit its first large immigration of Negroes. By 1920 this group constituted 4 per cent of the total population; by 1940 it had reached 9 per cent. Since the outbreak of World War II, the increase in Negro population has gone on apace, with no definite figures available as to the exact number of increase.

The types of conflict between races is more acute than the conflict among nationality groups. In Detroit, as elsewhere, unrest among Negroes has centered on four major areas: (1) lack of adequate housing; (2) discrimination in employment; (3) a feeling of uncertainty concerning the meaning of the war for their own group; (4) dissatisfaction caused by discriminations in eating places, in recreation, in travel, in the newspapers, in the courts, and many other specific areas of everyday activity.

Not only the community, but the public schools have long been aware of these four major manifestations of tension which cause disunity and misunderstanding among the peoples who must live together in the close proximity which urban life imposes upon its population. The schools have not been unmindful of their responsibility in the years past, but since the outbreak of open conflict have sharp-

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ened and intensified their program in intercultural education to meet the present challenge of the community's concern for the rights of all its citizens.

The present program of the Detroit Public Schools in intercultural education attacks the problem of building greater unity in the community on four major points: (1) administrative policy and direction; (2) teacher education, both pre-service and in-service; (3) school experiences for pupils, both curricular and so-called extracurricular; (4) community cooperation. School experiences for children will be described in some detail in this paper; only brief mention can be made of the other three ways in which the schools hope to realize their objectives of aiding the people of Detroit to understand all groups better.

The Superintendent of Schools has set up an Administrative Committee whose function it is to propose matters of policy to the Superintendent and his staff and to serve as a clearing house for various types of activities in the schools. Within the past several months this Committee has studied the number and positions of Negro personnel employed by the Board of Education; has stimulated the setting up of individual school committees in each school building of the city to study closely the particular problems in intercultural education in that school; has conducted a city-wide institute for the chairmen of these school committees; has presented at teachers' meetings a series of speakers on intercultural education; has studied teacher selection and placement techniques and policies as they have bearing on matters pertaining to prejudices concerning race and nationality; has sponsored the preparation of a bulletin on intercultural education which will shortly be distributed to all teachers of the city; has accepted the services of a field worker supplied by the Julius Rosenwald Foundation to study race relations in the school and in the com-

munity. These are only a representative listing of the many activities which engage the efforts of the Administrative Committee. Briefly, its chief value is to give status and impetus to the program in intercultural education; to act as a coordinating agency for the various developments which are worked out by the individual schools and teachers of the city; and to study general school policies as they have relationship to the problem of intercultural understanding in the total school program.

Effective teacher education is, without doubt, one of the most vital concerns in the over-all program of eliminating prejudice and building good will among children. In this respect, Detroit is fortunate, for it draws heavily upon Wayne University for the training of its teachers and the University is itself a unit in the public school system. At the present time required courses introduce all student teachers to basic social problems. In addition, many of the students elect courses in anthropology, race relations, and others of similar content which are offered in the College of Liberal Arts. Before entrance to the College of Education, teaching majors are required to complete one hundred clock hours of service in some community agency where they have contacts with a wide sampling of the city's population. Directed teaching is carried on in schools with heterogeneous populations which again helps acquaint student teachers with children from various national backgrounds and racial groups.

For in-service teachers, Wayne University has recently inaugurated two new courses: "Problems of Intercultural Education" and "Inter-Americanism in the Elementary and Secondary Schools." In addition to these courses, reference has already been made to committees, to institutes, to teachers' meetings, to a lecture series, to bulletins—all of which help to educate in-service teachers in the

materials and techniques of intercultural education. Demonstration lessons have been presented in various fields to which groups of teachers have been invited. The lessons have further acquainted teachers with materials and techniques.

The need for close cooperation with various community groups if real progress is to be made in this area of education is definitely recognized. During the past month, the Board of Education acted as one of the sponsors of a two-day conference on intercultural education which was attended by over two thousand persons, all representatives of a broad cross section of the total population in the community. More than seventy organizations in the city and from nearby cities were likewise sponsors of this effort. Included were labor groups, religious organizations, racial and national organizations, civic clubs, professional groups, and many others. The conference was, by common consent, of great value to the community, both for the fine material which was presented by the eminent speakers who participated in it, but more particularly, perhaps, for the splendid opportunity it afforded for representatives of these many varied groups to work together in planning and managing such an undertaking. The contacts which were thus made possible for the representatives in the school system were particularly helpful.

The Board of Education and Wayne University each maintain a Speakers' Bureau which has on its roster trained speakers in the various phases of intercultural education who are sent to those organizations in the community which request their services. Thus another point of contact is constantly maintained between school and community.

A standing committee, composed of representatives from many organizations of the type named in connection with the sponsorship of the conference, meets regularly to

gain information concerning developments in the schools' program of intercultural education and to make recommendations for the further development of that program. This committee has a chairman appointed by the Superintendent of Schools and an official representative from the Board of Education. The committee is an effective channel for interpreting the schools' program to the community and likewise serves as a clearing house of information concerning the desires and interests of various groups in the community as these refer to the schools' program.

With such organizations as the Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the Round Table of Christians and Jews, the schools work closely, using special facilities and resources which these organizations may provide which are suitable for school use.

The school program itself is concerned with two areas of education in this field: (1) the curriculum proper and (2) those opportunities for education which come from classroom living, from extra-curricular activities, and from teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil relationships. Up to the present time, no curricular materials have been prepared which have been sent out on a city-wide basis. Rather, teachers have been left to their own initiative to develop significant programs which fit their unique situations. Visual aids, recordings, books, unit outlines, and other similar helps have been made available to them. A suggested outline for the observance of Negro History Week was sent out to all teachers during the current year.

The program as it is being developed in the schools stresses four different types of approach: (1) contactual; (2) appreciative; (3) factual; (4) ethical and patriotic. None of these is stressed to the exclusion of the others. The degree to which any *one* is stressed depends upon the groups represented in the

school population and upon the age level of the children.

The contactual approach attempts to build up understanding and unity among diverse groups by promoting satisfying face-to-face contacts and happy group living among children of differing races and nationalities. In schools of widely heterogeneous populations, the challenge of providing for happy person-to-person experiences for all the children within the school is one of the greatest facing the teacher. Most teachers find ways to help children minimize their differences as ingeniously as did Miss X. Mary, a Negro child, was chosen by her class to be the mother in the play the children were about to present. She in turn chose two daughters; one a white child, one a Negro child. The big smart boy in the back row immediately piped up concerning the incongruity of such a situation. For a moment the children seemed uncertain as to how to proceed until the teacher reassured them by saying, "I think it's perfectly all right for Mary to choose Alice and Sue for her daughters, if she wants them. After all, Mary who is the mother is only ten years old, and Alice and Sue are ten and twelve. It's even more impossible, you know, for a mother to have a daughter older than herself than for her to have one of a little different color." The class immediately saw that no dilemma had been created by Mary's choice—for what did age matter? And therefore, what did color matter? The play went on to the satisfaction of all.

Schools with mixed populations offer endless opportunity for children's learning to live together on a democratic basis, to respect one another's customs and traditions. Recently I listened to third graders, representing some fifteen nationalities and all three of the major religious groups, discussing the ways in which their families celebrate Easter. No one's way was considered "queer"; each was interesting

because it was different. Jewish children felt comfortable in describing some of the ceremony of the Passover, all because the teacher had built up a social climate in that classroom where every individual was respected, and everyone's particular way of life was accepted as an interesting contribution to a total pattern of living.

In those schools where such opportunities are not present because all the children are of a relatively homogeneous population, schools plan two types of programs: (1) they invite adults from the community who represent various culture groups to speak to the children or (2) they exchange programs with schools where the children come from different background than the children know first hand. In both types of program, care is taken to orient the pupils for their experiences with the groups or individuals with whom they are to make contact. The children of the Higginbotham School in Detroit have prepared an excellent original program around the life of George Washington Carver which has been presented to a number of schools where there are no Negro children. On such occasions, provision has been made for the children to have face-to-face contact with one another through lunch periods, tours of the school building, and informal conversation.

One of the finest outcomes of this type of activity has been the inter-school planning which has gone on between the faculties of various schools. In many instances it has given white teachers their first opportunity to work closely with Negro teachers and the contact has been of mutual help in building better understanding and respect for each group.

Many organizations in the city are glad to furnish speakers for school programs and through this type of contact, children have come to know fine persons representing Negro, Chinese, Jewish, and many nationality groups.

Since face-to-face contacts with minority groups are necessarily limited for many children, this means of education must be supplemented by vicarious experience. A library of visual aids, both moving pictures and still films which develop a feeling of one-ness, with people, is available for school use. Greatest dependence for worthwhile vicarious experience is placed, however, upon those fine portrayals of personal and group living which modern children's books make so readily accessible to teachers and children. Such books as *Tobe*, *The Blue Willow*, *Up the Hill*, *Steppin and Family*, and *All American*, to mention only a few of the hundreds of good titles available, all present children of differing racial, religious, national, and socio-economic background so convincingly as individual human beings with hopes, aspirations, and interests very similar to those which all children know, that it is impossible not to feel kinship with them. These books offer splendid opportunity to measure the way of life the children know first hand with that of these book friends and to make comparisons and contrasts which do not point out any evidence of *superiority* or *inferiority* in cultures, but which point up *differences* which should be accepted as welcome enrichment to the American way of life.

Books of this sort are supplied to teachers and children in the school libraries and in classroom collections for literature and reading classes. Lists of titles have been prepared which guide children in making choices of such books from the public library.

The second type of approach is appreciational. This involves an understanding of the contributions made to world civilization and particularly to American life by the outstanding representatives of the many cultures represented in the American scene. It involves knowing the facts concerning the great names

of both contemporary life and generations past; it involves also knowing the folk contributions made by various peoples. Children learn that Marian Anderson is a great Negro singer; they also learn that Negroes have made a great contribution to American music through the spirituals they have developed. In addition, they sing spirituals and by this means understand better their true beauty and meaning. They study biography to understand who the outstanding representatives of the various nationalities and races are and what their contributions have been; similarly they examine exhibits of art and handicraft developed by these peoples, they dance their dances, they wear their costumes, they eat their food, they learn something about their language and their way of life. All of this activity is pointed toward one consideration: *differences do not constitute inferiority or superiority*—they are merely facets of an intricate and interesting pattern of living.

The third approach is the presentation and analysis of factual data. This approach is perhaps the backbone of all the others. It may be that a class is studying housing. So far as possible, facts concerning housing in Detroit, particularly as it affects certain of the less favored groups in the city, are presented. Analyses are made of the effect of the type of living conditions available to these people, both upon them and upon the city in general. In a class studying propaganda, such myths and clichés as the one that Jews control the money of the country are refuted by presentation of the facts in the matter. In practically every subject matter field in the curriculum are opportunities given to present facts which will further understanding of diverse groups of people and destroy old myths and clichés. In some schools, the boys and girls have made special studies of the facts of race and their social significance. These pupils consider the

implications for such data as these: While white soldiers surpassed Negro soldiers in intelligence tests during World War I, Northern Negroes surpassed Southern whites.

The Detroit Board of Education has been fortunate in securing from the Cranbrook Institute of Science its unique and splendid exhibit "The Races of Mankind." This exhibit portrays in graphic form the chief anthropological concepts which are presented in Benedict and Weltfish's pamphlet bearing the same title. This exhibit will travel from one high school to another, where it will be on display for the benefit of the students in each school and will also be available to pupils in the elementary and intermediate schools of the surrounding district. Teachers will be supplied with classroom sets of the pamphlet, *Races of Mankind*. These will be used in preparing their pupils to see the exhibit and in carrying on follow-up work after they have seen it. This exhibit doubtlessly will clear up, both for teachers and pupils, many of the common misconceptions concerning race differences.

The fourth approach is the ethical and patriotic one. Many teachers are evolving with their boys and girls statements of what it means, in terms of concrete community living, to carry out the ideals of the Declaration of Independence or the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. They are helping pupils to see that our country and our community is really faced with what Myrdal has termed "the American dilemma" in that there is extreme discrepancy between what we declare in the "American Creed" and what we practice in our treatment of minority groups. Boys and girls are being made to realize that the ideals of democracy must be realized on the home front if they are to be made effective in any large scale plan for a better post-war world.

As was stated earlier in this article, no city-wide "plan" for injecting these ap-

proaches into the school programs has been put into operation. Rather, teachers have been encouraged to use these approaches according to the peculiar needs of the community and the unique character of the school. Furthermore, teachers have not been specifically instructed as to how these materials should be organized for incorporation into the regular curriculum of the school. A number of ways are possible, and observation bears out that all are in operation in the Detroit Schools. First is the observance of special days and weeks such as Negro History Week, Good Will Day, Pan-American Day, and many others. Likewise, special assemblies as pageants prepared by pupils or by speakers from the community are planned. This method of organization has certain points in its favor, but it lacks continuity and continued emphasis on the problem and therefore can be used only to a limited extent.

The second method of organization is the all-school project. The entire school spends a period of time in studying the culture of a group of people or of several groups of people. Each subject matter field contributes to the general development and enrichment of the general theme. Not long ago the Cadillac School in Detroit made a detailed and enriched study of the culture of Latin America.

The third plan of organization is to present a special unit in a subject matter field. The eighth-grade English class of the Harding School recently spent eight weeks in studying the question, "What has the Negro contributed to American life from the day of slavery to the present time?" An original program in the auditorium culminated the study, in which the historical and cultural development of the Negro was presented as an integral part of the country's history and development.

The final form of organization—the best,

perhaps, and most difficult to achieve—is the completely integrated curriculum. Thus, when the Revolutionary War is being studied, incidental mention is made of the fact that Crispus Attacks, the first man to give his life in the battle for freedom, was a Negro; that Haym Salomon, who managed the finances of the country at that period, was a Jew; that Kosciusko, who ventured much for freedom in this country during that period, was a Pole; and so on for the special contribution of all groups. At the present time, supervisors in the various subject-matter fields are checking on ways in which topics which give a more complete picture of the contributions made to the life of this country by all its peoples may be pointed up in the various subject-matter fields of the curriculum. They are encouraging teachers to use supplementary aids to supply materials that present textbooks now fail to include.

No program is complete without some attempt at the evaluation of its effectiveness. The Department of Research is at the present time engaged in building two types of tests: one to use as stimulation and motivation for teaching; the second to use as a means of diagnosis for measuring existing prejudices.

Detroit is attempting to meet the challenge inherent in Lewis Mumford's observation that in the time between 1930 and 1940 passed not a decade but a thousand years. Perhaps the decade through which we are now passing will bring about even more rapid and more far reaching change. The challenge to society is to keep the human spirit and social organization abreast of technological and physical change in community living. The schools of Detroit are attempting to do their part in meeting their present responsibility and in being organized to make provision for whatever challenge the future years may bring.

THE UNITED NATIONS ON DISPLAY

(Continued from page 178)

New Zealand, Harper—Windy Island. Doubleday, \$2.00 (6-8gr.)

Norway, McSwigan—Snow Treasure. Dutton, \$2.00 (4-7gr.)

Panama, Fast—Goethals and the Panama Canal. Messner, \$2.50 (6gr. and up)

Philippines, Crockett—Lucio and his Nuong. Holt, \$2.00 (1-5gr.)

Poland, Kelly—Trumpeter of Krakow; a Tale of the Fifteenth Century. Macmillan, \$2.50 (6gr. and up)

Soviet Union, Felsen—Struggle is Our Brother. Dutton, \$2.00 (7gr. and up)

Union of South Africa, Fitzpatrick—Jock of the Bushveld. Longmans, \$3.50 (7gr. and up)

United Kingdom, Savery—Enemy Brothers. Longmans, \$2.50 (6gr. and up)

SOURCES

- (1) United Nations Information Office—610 5th Ave., New York 20.
- (2) *American Library Association Bulletin*, January, 1944, p. 13.
- (3) British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York.
- (4) East and West Ass'n., 40 East 49th St., New York.
- (5) Council on Books in Wartime. Children's Book Committee. The Council, 400 Madison Avenue, New York 17.

The Spring Children's Books

AGATHA SHEA AND STAFF¹

For Primary Grades

Baby Jack and Jumping Jack Rabbit. By Dr. L. S. Tireman, adapted by Evelyn Yrisarri. Illustrated by Ralph Douglas. University of New Mexico Press, \$1.25

The first of a series created by the University of New Mexico to tell young children about the animals and plants of the Southwest. These are very short stories of a baby jackrabbit and his small sister who play with their desert friends and occasionally get into mischief. The artist has caught the spirit of the stories with simple, vivid sketches. Good for reading aloud to pre-school children. For grades 2-3.

The Good-Luck Horse. By Chih-Yi Chan and Plato Chan. Whittlesey House, \$1.50

The drawings by 12-year-old Plato Chan alone make this one of the outstanding picture books of the season. The mood and spirit of the story are communicated by the pictures. This old Chinese folk tale is about a paper horse that was changed into a live noble steed. Good for story-telling. For grades 2-4.

Here Comes Pete. By Eleanor Clymer. Illustrated by Mildred Boyle. McBride (Junior Literary Guild), \$2.00

Pete was too young to attend school and when his family moved to a new house in the suburbs he kept himself busy making new friends. Among them were Mr. Kelly the baker, Tony the vegetable man, Whisker the goat, the milkman, and the coalman. A well illustrated, wholesome story which shows an understanding of a friendly curious boy of five. For grades 3-4.

Mother Goose on the Rio Grande. By Frances Alexander. Banks Upshaw & Co., \$1.50

A collection of charming Mexican nursery

¹Thomas Hughes Room, Chicago Public Library.

rhymes, folklore and games which captures the universal spirit of childhood play. The rhymes are presented in both English and Spanish on alternate pages with directions for playing the native games to the meter of the verse. An excellent contribution to further our Good Neighbor Policy. For grades 2-3 or beginning Spanish readers.

Nappy Planted a Garden. Written and illustrated by Inez Hogan. Dutton, \$1.00

This appealing little book may give other small boys the idea of becoming a soldier of the soil as Nappy was. Nappy worked under sister's direction; planted, watered, weeded and used the Flit gun on the armies of enemy bugs. In the end he ate of his bumper crop until his jacket buttons popped right off! For grades 2-3.

Tall Book of Nursery Tales. Illustrated by Feodor Rojankovsky. Harper, \$1.00

A riot of gay color beautifully harmonized distinguishes this collection of favorite nursery tales. The tall, narrow format is the same as that of its companion volume "The Tall Book of Nursery Tales." No child can resist the captivating animals who have been portrayed with humor as well as naturalness. An outstanding book.

Susan Who Lives in Australia. By Elisabeth MacIntyre. Scribner, \$1.50

A lively colored picture story book with jingling rhyme, about a little girl who lives in Australia. Susan lives on a sheep-station and visits her cousins in Sydney where they go sightseeing. There are strange Australian words such as Billybong, Jackaroo, Manly, etc., which are explained through the numerous pictures and glossary. A charming, gay and instructive story. For grades 2-3.

3 and 30 Watchbirds. Written and illustrated by Munro Leaf. Stokes, \$1.35

Amusing pictures and simple text characterize this colorful instructive picture book. In clever fashion the little watchbirds present to boys and girls the people they would not wish to be like. Especially timely is the introduction of such characters as the Shoe scuffer and the Waster. Munro Leaf's books have always been enjoyed by the children and this will be no exception. For grades 1-4.

Thumbelina. By Hans Christian Andersen. Translated by Paul Leyssac. Illustrated by Oscar Fabr  s. Putnam (Hyperion Press) \$1.75

Hans Christian Andersen's well-known tale of the tiny little maiden has come out this year in an attractive new edition. The fresh, lively translation of Mr. Leyssac has been enlivened by a great many delicately colored illustrations quite in the spirit of the story. A charming gift book.

Weejack and His Neighbors. By Carroll Lane Fenton. Day, \$1.75

An appealing little nature book with the large print that the youngest readers love. The stories are about small animals, insects, and reptiles that may be seen in most sections of the country. All sorts of interesting facts about their habits, homes, food, and means of protection are told in simple, easy-to-understand words. For grades 1-3.

For The Middle Grades

A Bee in Her Bonnet. By Eva Kristoffersen. Illustrated by Helen Sewell. Crowell, \$2.00

Present day American farm life is the background for this story of Mary Carol Magee's experiences on a farm in Nebraska. Mary didn't want to leave her brother David behind in Detroit but she soon discovers that there are many things to do on a farm to keep from getting lonesome. She becomes a bee keeper, learns to love and care for farm

animals, ride a pony and attends a country school. A delightful story. Grades 4-6.

Chinese-American Song and Game Book. Compiled by A. Gertrude Jacobs. Barnes, \$2.50

Games of Chinese children that American children will delight to use. The Chinese text as well as the English is given. Elementary lesson in the Chinese language is also included. This delightful book beautifully illustrated by a 14-year-old Chinese artist will be of interest to adults also, although the melodies are so simple that quite young children can learn and sing them. Bibliography adds to the book's value. Grades 4-6.

Far from Marlborough Street. By Elizabeth Philbrook. Illustrated by Marjorie Torrey. Viking, \$2.00

A friendly, warmhearted little girl helps to solve a mystery and rescue her uncle from trouble. It was unusual in Massachusetts of the late 1700's for a girl to travel alone but there was no one else to go. So Nancy, accepting her mission as a knightly quest, set off resolving to remember her father's admonition, "No matter what happens, keep your head." Beyond the mystery this book is especially interesting for its picture of the post roads, coaches, and inns of early New England. Gay and enchanting tale. Grades 5-6.

John Philip Sousa the March King. By Mina Lewiton. Didier, \$1.50

Slight but well told story of the great band master to five Presidents. Children know his marches but not many know about the man himself. They will be interested in the boy who composed his first piece of music at 12 as well as in the man who became the March King. There is a key note of patriotism throughout the book. A list of Sousa's marches is included. For grades 4-5.

The Land of William of Orange. By Adriaan J. Barnouw. Lippincott, \$2.00

From the Dutch twins to Hans Brinker, stories of Holland have a fascination for children. This book of interestingly presented facts is valuable to fill in their background. The gallant spirit of the Dutch people shines through this animated combination of history, geography, and social life. To make the text more vivid there are forty beautiful clear photographs. For grades 4-5.

Let's Build. By Constance Homer Crocker. Houghton, \$1.50

An easily followed, excellently illustrated book on simple carpentry. There is no need for blue prints or actual inch measurements in constructing the various objects. The author has prepared the diagrams and instructions for a seven-or-eight-year-old to follow himself. Only a few common tools and materials are needed. For grades 3-4.

Lizzie. By May Justus. Illustrated by Christine Chisholm. Whitman, \$1.50

Delightful story of little Lizzie who kept house for her ailing Grampy in the mountains of Tennessee. One of the guests at a nearby hotel overcame Lizzie's shyness and the two little girls formed a strong friendship. A happy picture of life among the kindly mountain people that will appeal strongly to the nine-year-olds. There is an amusing touch in the natural, gay illustrations that adds to the enjoyment. For grades 4-6.

Magic Bed-Knob. By Mary Norton. Putnam (Hyperion Press), \$1.75

How to be a witch in ten easy lessons. A rollicking fantasy with a nice balance of fact and fiction, this tale will delight the imaginative nine-year-olds—the Mary Poppins fans. Of course Miss Parker was only a beginner in magic, otherwise she might have shown the three English children more amazing adventures. While the young readers may agree that magic is out of place in this modern world each one is probably secretly eyeing his own

bed-knob with a speculative regard. In spite of the lovely clear colors of the illustrations, the format with its small print and double columns will hardly appeal to children. A fine story for reading aloud. For grades 4-6.

The Old Aztec Story Teller. By J. A. Rickard. Illustrated by William Brady. Bernard Ackerman, \$1.00

A collection of eight Mexican folk tales which have been previously published in juvenile magazines and now appear for the first time in book form. The stories have the appeal and charm of Old Mexico. North American children will enjoy these folk stories which have been told to Latin American children for many years. For grades 4-6.

Sierra Sally. By Eleanor Hoffman. Illustrated by Louis Lundeen. Nelson, \$2.00

Unusual horse story with a background of Southern California ranches and the high Sierras. Sally's mother was a famous cow pony of the beautiful Palamino strain. Little brown Sally could not be satisfied with the life that suited all her golden companions. She longed for the snows and cool waters and rocky paths of the high mountains. How she got her wish and proved herself a real heroine is simply and gayly told with real beauty. For grades 4-6.

So Long Ago. Written and illustrated by E. Boyd Smith. Houghton, \$2.00

An especially attractive book for the young scientist that traces the development of animals from the earliest beginnings to the present day. There are seventeen illustrations in the soft colors Mr. Smith habitually uses, drawn with a delicate humor. Opposite each colored illustration is a black and white duplicate with the name of the animal clearly indicated. The information is accurate enough without being too technical for the young child. The book will certainly stimulate further research. For grades 4-6.

Swords and Sails in the Philippines. By Phyllis Ayers Sowers. Illustrated by Margaret Ayer. Whitman, \$2.00

A timely fast moving story of a young Filipino who helps the Americans during the Japanese attack on the Islands. The colorful tropical background and the picturesque Moro people add to the enjoyment of the thrilling events, while the courage and fearlessness of the young hero engender admiration in the reader. For grades 5-7.

They Put Out to Sea. Written and illustrated by Roger Duvoisin. Knopf, \$2.50

One of the most fascinating geography books which has appeared for some time. It is a dramatic presentation of exploration from the time of the early traders to the days of Magellan, showing the contributions of all to the making of the world's map. The striking, colorful illustrations and picture maps help make the story vivid. It should be a great incentive to further reading along the same subject as well as a delight in itself. For grades 3-6.

Three and a Pigeon. By Kitty Barne. Illustrated by Stuart Tresilian. Dodd, \$2.00

Lively mystery story which will please the middle graders. Bombed out of their home in an English village, the doctor's family seeks a new home in the country, taking with them a little London evacuee. In the new home which has been long unoccupied there is a hidden pigeon-loft guarded by a Belgian boy whose employers are ostensibly chicken farmers. When the children realize there is something underhanded going on here, they make great efforts to find out what it is, and the suspense heightens until the mystery is solved. For grades 5-7.

Two Children and their Jungle Zoo. By Rose Brown. Illustrated by Ann Eshner. Lippincott, \$2.00

A summer spent in an Amazon Valley village provides plenty of adventure and

amusement for Tatu and Joa—characters already familiar to many girls and boys. To children interested in animals this book will especially appeal not only because of the amusing incidents with the collection of strange pets, but, too, for the information about Brazilian animals and birds. A trip to the rubber country is not the least interesting of their many adventures. For grades 5-6.

When the New Year Came in March. By Dorothea Stillman. Illustrated by Neda Walker. Dutton, \$2.00

Connecticut in the early 17th century forms the background for this charming picture of family life. Though the plot is very slight, the picturesque customs and celebrations of other times have a great fascination and the perils and dangers of that early life provide a thrill. Very attractive illustrations add to the beauty of the make-up. For grades 5-6.

For The Upper Grades

Army Surgeon. By Genevieve Fox. Illustrated by Forrest Orr. Little, \$2.00

Dr. William Beaumont made a very important contribution to medical science in the nineteenth century. In most readable fashion the author tells the story of how it came about, as strange and exciting a one as any piece of fiction. A young army surgeon stationed at Fort Macinac, he had as a patient a voyageur with a gunshot wound in his stomach. Unable to cure the wound completely he had a peep hole into the human stomach and used it to further his knowledge of gastric juice. Fascinating story even to those not greatly interested in science. For grades 7-9.

Big Brownie. By Rutherford Montgomery. Holt, 2.00

Big Brownie and his sister Bump, Kodiak cubs, orphaned by hunters, are befriended by Ruth Keller and her father, naturalists. The

bears learn to trust man until an expedition of hunters come to the island. The naturalists finally win out by routing the hunters. The Northern setting and portrayal of the everyday life and habits of the bears make up the background for this story, which also has a slight love element. For grades 7-9.

China's First Lady. By Helen Nicolay. Illustrated with photographs. Appleton, \$2.00

An excellently written biography of Madame Chiang Kai-shek, whose colorful and eventful life is of great interest to the young people of today. In addition to the life of the Soong family, the book contains much of China's historical background. For grades 8-9.

Dr. George Washington Carver. By Shirley Graham and George B. Lipscomb. Messner, \$2.50

Fine inspiring biography of one of the most interesting characters of our time—the Negro lad born in slavery who overcame all obstacles to become one of America's leading scientists. Entertaining incidents of his childhood as well as his work at Tuskegee and his association with all the great men and women of the day are woven into a stimulating story that no young person should miss. For grades 6-9.

Farther North. By Kathrene Pinkerton. Harcourt, \$2.00

Ann Jackman's chance meeting with a party of campers leads to unexpected adventures. The Jackman family had settled at Far Lake three years before to take up trapping and start a fur farm. Accompanied by an old trapper, Ann and her brother join two city-bred boys on a canoe trip in the Canadian wilderness and incidentally to investigate a gold mine. A fight with claim jumpers disables the trapper, who has to be carried back the long route over lakes and portages. A convincing outdoor story which brings out the need for a strong character. For grades 7-8.

The Flags of Dawn. By Esther Melbourne Knox. Little, \$2.00

Romantic story centered about the signing of the Magna Carta. Deeply involved in the intrigues that went on before the adoption of the charter are Halcyon, a young Welsh girl, and Father Girauldur de Barri, a world-renowned scholar. The historical details are carefully worked out and the spirit of democracy and love of freedom permeates the whole. The thoughtful older boy or girl will gain much from the story. For grades 8-9.

High Prairie. By Walter and Marion Havighurst. Illustrated by Gertrude Howe Farrar, \$2.00

Sensitively told story of the struggles of a Norwegian family to found a home on the lonely Dakota prairies. Little Nels and Gurri, like their parents, remember fondly the dear homeland of Norway but they are quick to pick up the new language and customs. They help vigorously with the daily tasks and share the joys and hardships of pioneer life as they grow out of childhood and leave the family home, love for the wide spaciousness of their new land is strong and glowing in their hearts. For grades 6-9.

Life with Alice. By Dick Richards. Illustrated with photographs. Coward, \$2.00

The keeper of the elephant house at the Bronx Zoo has written a very readable account of his experiences, especially with the India Howdah elephant, Alice. Along with much interesting information about elephants there runs a matter-of-fact, often humorous story of Alice's adventures and escapades which will appeal to a wide range of readers. Younger children will enjoy it as a story while to the older boy the interest will center in the exciting record of an actual experience of forty years among elephants. For grades 4-9.

Rookie of the Year. By John R. Tunis. Harcourt, \$2.00

A Big League baseball story in which we meet the characters of *Keystone Kids* fame. The young manager of the Dodgers recognizes a lack of responsibility in his star rookie pitcher, who has a weakness for drink. Before the fight for the series pennant the difficulties are overcome through Spike's ability to influence his men. Mr. Tunis knows baseball and at the same time doesn't dodge the issue of character development. For grades 7-9.

Separate Star. By Loula G. Erdman. Longmans, \$2.25

Good characterization and a lively, plausible plot distinguish this career story for older girls. Gail Warren's first teaching position in a small town offers a real challenge to her ability. But that same ability plus a genuine love for her work win the respect and interest of the community and gain a cooperation that promised well for the fulfillment of her hopes. For grades 8-9.

Some Follow the Sea. By George Felsen. Dutton, \$2.50

A thrilling, rather grim story of the Merchant Marine. The sight of death and destruction on an old freighter carrying a shipment of horses to England is too much for seventeen-year-old Chris Hollister to bear. How he overcomes fear and courageously sails once more makes an excellent exciting tale but one that does not hesitate to depict stark realities. For grades 8-9.

Sounding Trumpet, Julia Ward Howe and the Battle Hymn of the Republic. By Louise Hall Tharp. Illustrated by Edward C. Caswell. McBride, \$2.00

Fictionized biography told in vivid and spirited fashion against a background of the times. It is an interesting picture of childhood and sheltered girlhood in old New York; fashionable life as beauty and belle; romance and marriage to Samuel Gridley Howe, "the

Chevalier;" later life as mother of a family and aide to her famous husband as well as protagonist herself for the cause of right. Gallant, gay and lovable Julia Ward Howe should be an inspiration to many a growing girl. For grades 7-9.

Thunderbolt House. By Howard Pease. Illustrated by Armstrong Sperry. Doubleday, \$2.00

The San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906 provide a spectacular ending to this mystery story for young people. A contented average American family is drawn into the maelstrom of society life by an unexpected legacy from an uncle who had founded his fortune in the old lawless days of the city's history. As young Allen slowly untangles the threads of mystery that complicate their new life, it becomes clear that money loved for its own sake can never bring true happiness. Different from the usual Pease sea story. For grades 7-9.

WATCH FOR THESE SPRING BOOKS
Adshead, Gladys—*What Miranda Knew.* Oxford, \$1.50

Avison, George—*Uncle Sam's Navy: How It Fights.* Macmillan, \$1.00

Berry, Erick—*Hearthstone in the Wilderness.* Macmillan, \$2.00

Blackstock, Josephine—*Island on the Beam.* Putnam, \$2.50

Brock, Emma L.—*Mr. Wren's House.* Knopf, \$1.25

Coatsworth, Elizabeth—*Trudy and the Tree House.* Macmillan, \$2.00

Cormack, Maribelle. *Road to Down Under.* Appleton, \$2.50

Cothren, Marion B. *Pigeon Heroes: Birds of War and Messengers.* Coward, \$2.00

Ferris, Helen—*Tommy and His Dog, Hurry.* Doubleday, \$1.50

Howard, Elizabeth—*Dorinda.* Lothrop, \$2.00

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| Hunt, Mabel Leigh— <i>Young Man-of-the-house</i> .
Lippincott, \$1.75 | Rohmer, Albert E.— <i>Ivan, the Iron Horse</i> .
Whitman, \$1.25 |
| Meadowcroft, Enid La Monte— <i>Silver for
General Washington</i> . Crowell, \$2.00 | Rudolph, Marguerita— <i>Baby Bears</i> . Macmillan,
\$1.00 |
| Norton, André— <i>Sword is Drawn</i> . Houghton,
\$2.00 | Sperry, Armstrong— <i>Storm Canvas</i> . Winston,
\$2.00 |
| Pollock, Katherine— <i>Sky Ride</i> . Scribner, \$1.75 | Thorne, Diana and Moran, Connie— <i>Cbips:
Story of a Cocker Spaniel</i> . Winston, \$1.50 |
| Robinson, W. W. and Irene Robinson— <i>Big
Boy</i> . Macmillan, \$1.50 | |

THE LANGUAGE ARTS IN THE LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

(Continued from page 187)

get the children to talk, but to keep them from all talking at once. Then the stage was set for developing and improving their power of expression.

Again, recent evidence from a very average class in Minneapolis shows the possibility of developing a broad language program around the fourth grade social studies unit on the jungle. Outlining was taught in the planning of topics, letters were written for such material as the *United Air Lines Kit on Aviation*, reading for facts was based upon textbooks supplemented by available copies of *The Weekly Reader* and the *Junior Red Cross Magazine*. The children staged a radio quiz in review and committees refused all questions which did not "make sense," which were illegibly written, or which did not end in question marks and begin with capital letters. Dramatization of the simple story of *Kintu, a Congo Adventure* (a dollar copy of which was in the hands of the teacher) gave opportunity for abundant use of writing, reading, and speaking. Inviting guests for

the play and receiving them courteously on arrival gave a chance for the practice of social skills. Tremendous interest was aroused in writing letters to fathers in Africa, in original stories of how it feels to be lost in the jungle, and in the preparation of a movie scenario based on the study.

Teachers everywhere tend to be tired and discouraged. Children are excitable and restive under any program which does not capture their interest and give adequate direction to their energies. After a morning such as the Saturday at Rollins School in Kansas City, one is inspired with a sense of the potentialities of a vital school program in a world as unsettled for children as it is for adults. Surely it was to teachers of the language arts in wartime that Rodo addressed his message: "Assurance of our part in bringing about a work which shall survive us, fruitful in times to come, exalts our human dignity, and gives us triumph even over the limitations of our nature—" and, shall we add, our times?

³Rodo, Jose Enrique. *Ariel*, p. 141, Houghton, 1922.

A Soft Answer Turneth

(Letters of Explanation and Apology)

MABEL F. RICE¹

"This is the first time I ever realized that a complaint could be *courteous*," Tom had said as the eighth grade class completed that part of the business letter writing unit. "It seems as though the whole world would be a pleasanter place in which to live if more people knew that and tried it."

"But what does one do if he always seems to be the person who commits the offense?" asked Patty Breen anxiously. "That is my trouble. I am on the wrong side of a complaint right now."

"Write a letter of explanation," suggested Vernon, "and tell what you plan to do about it. Or perhaps you should just apologize. It all depends on the situation."

"There isn't much I can do about it," replied Betty. "My dog has killed Mrs. Anderson's cat. Mrs. Anderson is that wealthy old lady who lives across the street from us. She is away for three months and left the cat with the Frames, our next door neighbors, to board for her. She just loved the cat and was very particular about its food and care. Of course, Towser didn't mean to hurt it. He's just a big, overgrown, good-natured puppy. But the cat was old and fat and Towser was too rough. Anyway the cat died. Mrs. Anderson will have to know and Daddy and Mother say that I am the one to tell her."

"That would be better than waiting for someone else to tell her," said Jack. "That's the mistake I made when my baseball went through Mr. Bradley's window when he was away. Mother said I'd have to tell him but I put it off and someone else told him first and he came storming over to our house. I should

have gone to him first. I know that now, if anything like that ever happens to me again."

"This is where I come in," said Allan Ames ruefully. "My rabbits got out this morning and ate up Mr. Grimm's cabbage and lettuce plants in his Victory garden which is his pride and joy."

Mary King had her troubles too. She had borrowed a book from Miss Ellis. Her small brother had pulled the cover off the table and tumbled a vase of flowers and water over the book.

"It looks as though you are just going to have to earn the money and buy a new book," said Peter consolingly. "One can replace a book but not an heirloom. Our Sunday School class borrowed a real Colonial chair and a candlestick for our Colonial play. A part of the scenery came down, broke the chair and smashed the glass candle-stick. The chair can be repaired but not the candle-stick and we can't afford to pay what an antique is worth. What does one do in a case like that?"

"When our Girl Scouts used Mrs. Andrews' cottage at the beach, someone accidentally knocked a pottery bowl off the mantel and broke it," said Jane Gray. "Mrs. Andrews had made the bowl herself and we couldn't exactly replace it. We wrote her a note of apology and sent her a beautiful new bowl for the mantel piece."

"Under the circumstances it was the nicest thing you could do," said Miss Ferris.

"On my trip to Chicago last summer my Aunt Ruth invited me to stop over with her

¹Miss Rice, who teaches at Whittier College, Whittier, California, wrote the interesting article on "Letters of Complaint" in our January issue.

for a couple of days on my return trip. I had a chance to get a ride back so couldn't stop. I wrote her when I got home but I should have written her as soon as I knew because she was expecting me."

When letters of complaint had been under discussion some of the pupils complained laughingly that they could think of nothing to complain about. But when it came to letters of explanation and apology almost everyone had a situation in mind. For those who didn't, Eleanor had a suggestion.

"Why can't we pretend that we are the defendants in one or more of the cases of the people who received the letters of complaint Miss Ferris posted on the bulletin board," she said. "Just because one receives a rude letter is no reason he should write a rude reply."

In addition to those letters Miss Ferris wrote on the board a list of suggestions which might appeal to still other pupils:

1. You borrowed a book and lost it.
2. You will miss your music lessons for an extra week because your family is staying out of town longer than you expected.
3. You had promised to mow Mrs. Clements' lawn next Saturday. Your family will not be back from their vacation at the lake by then.
4. You were invited to a party and accepted. At the last moment you were unable to get transportation into town and had no telephone.
5. You had promised to get a certain piece of music for a friend. You will be unable to get it for several weeks.

Some of the pupils used some of Miss Ferris' suggestions. Others wrote answers to the letters of complaint posted on the bulletin board. Some of the answers were masterpieces of tact and diplomacy. "Coals of fire letters," the boys called them.

The class came to certain general conclusions for letters of explanation and apology.

It is easy to fall into the habit of making alibis, they said. They should be avoided. Leave out detailed explanation. State the case simply.

"Don't try to excuse yourself so much," said Ellen to Anne. "After all, the book is lost but you are ordering a new one to replace it. That's all the lady needs to know."

After all the letters had been read to the group and suggestions made Sally asked, "Do you remember that chapter in *Anne of Green Gables* in which Anne apologized to Mrs. Rachel Lynde? She did it so thoroughly that she really enjoyed apologizing."

Most of the girls had read the story many times but the boys wanted to hear it and Eleanor promised to bring her copy the next day that Miss Ferris might read the chapter to the class.

"I don't think I would ever really enjoy making an apology as Anne did," said Eleanor, "but one thing I have learned. When I do have to make one, I'll waste no time in writing the letter and getting it all straightened at once."

The Educational Scene

The Pennsylvania State College will conduct its annual Conference on Reading Instruction July 19-21, 1944. The main theme of the conference will be "Developing Basic Reading Abilities." Among the speakers will be Dr. Leo J. Brueckner, Dr. Emmett A. Betts, Dr. Conrad Seegers, Dr. Gerald Yoakam, and many others. Demonstrations will be conducted by the staff of the Summer Session Demonstration School. Complete copies of the program may be obtained from Miss Betty J. Haugh, Room 8, Burrowes Education Building, The Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pennsylvania.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has issued a booklet on "Thomas Jefferson and Agriculture." It contains a vivid picture of Jefferson himself and will prove useful in connection with the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of his birth. It may be had free from Mr. T. Swann Harding, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

Published by the Smithsonian Institution (Washington 25, D. C.) in its War Background Series: *The Japanese*, by John F. Embree (No. 7), an illustrated study of Japanese life, along with "popular misconceptions" held by Americans regarding Japan; *Camouflage*, by Herbert Friedman (No. 5), photographs of nature's methods of disguise; and *The Peoples of the Soviet Union*, by Ales Hrdlicka (No. 3), pictures of the races of Russia's sixteen republics, by a leading anthropologist.

Harris Harvill, writing in the *Peabody Reflector* for February, 1944, explains how the social studies teacher may also be a teacher of reading. First he lays down these familiar but important rules: (1) Create a stimulating classroom environment which will arouse the student's desire to read; (2) provide a wide range of interesting, colorful reading material on varying levels of reading ability; (3) make the student's reading purposeful; (4) increase

the student's vocabulary. Then he offers more concrete suggestions. Teachers should use, not one, but many textbooks, now usually available on multiple lists. Material on social subjects topics may often be found in textbooks on such other subjects as business education, home economics, and literature. Library material, located with the aid of numerous booklists now available, should be brought into the classroom. Pamphlets and booklets listed in such catalogs as *Free and Inexpensive Learning Materials* (Peabody College, Nashville, Tenn.) should be accumulated. Work should be organized around a central idea or topic, and specific phases assigned to individuals or sub-committees in the class. Students should be encouraged to use the material in the preparation of some kind of map, poster, chart, or graph as a visual aid in sharing information with the class. Preparation for participation in panel discussions, interviews, and debates will likewise require purposeful reading.

A study of the reactions of two hundred Negro children to twenty stories about Negro children, made by Kittie F. Jones for her master's degree at the University of Cincinnati, is summarized in the March, 1944, issue of *Better Teaching*, a publication of the Cincinnati public schools. Miss Jones found that in most instances the third-grade children would have liked the stories better if the authors had used no dialect, but that the sixth-grade children were more inclined to accept the dialect, seemingly because they were able to interpret it. Third-grade children preferred the most humorous stories, sixth-grade children those which seemed most real and lifelike. A majority of the third-graders preferred stories about Negro children; only half of the sixth-graders preferred such stories. In general, Negro children object to portrayals of the conditions of poverty, ignorance, and oppression to which Negroes have been subjected; and they refuse to identify themselves with the "pickaninny" or illiterate types using distorted language and grotesque in appearance. They are alert to evidences of prejudice.

Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue are by Roma Gans, Ellen A. Frogner, Anne Jackson, Helen Laurie, Mary D. Reed, Bernardine Schmidt, Dorothy E. Smith, and Jean Gardiner Smith. Unsigned annotations are by the editor.]

FOR TEACHERS AND SUPERVISORS

Learning to Read through Experience. By Lillian A. Lamoreaux and Doris May Lee. D. Appleton-Century.

The authors have directed the suggestions in this book toward one of teachers' most persistent and persuasive problems, teaching the young child to read. In very clear terms they offer workable suggestions which classroom teachers can easily understand and follow. The specific problems they consider are those many teachers have found perplexing, such as understanding the status of the child's growth in reading readiness, utilizing the child's language in the creation of charts, and guiding some of the book-reading experiences of the beginner.

From the title of this book one would expect that the authors directed their help toward the reorientation of the skill of reading which is demanded in guiding children in the use of reading in their vital experiences. The broader considerations of reading readiness at the beginning of the volume might lead the reader to expect this. Far from it. The purposes of reading, the situations in which reading is described, the exaggerated control of vocabulary, the concept of promotion and the description of a school day are consistent with the curriculum based on teaching skills and knowledges in the conventional way. The difficulties teachers meet in teaching reading in a program in which young readers react to the variety of reading materials and situations about them are omitted; perhaps this is appropriate because of the philosophy of the book.

R. G.

Exploring Literature with Children. By Jean Betzner. "Practical Suggestions for Teaching," No. 7, Hollis L. Caswell, editor. Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University. Paper, \$0.60. Cloth, \$1.15

Persuasive argument for the uses of storytelling, drama, radio, records, and reading for the enrichment of children's lives and the satisfaction of children's individual, current needs. The little monograph is disappointing, however, as a practical guide for teachers. Grand and appealing generalizations cannot take the place of specific and concrete illustrations of the use of selections in satisfying the needs of individual boys and girls and of the organization of instruction in typical classrooms for the effective utilization of literature.

FOR CHILDREN

Three Boys of Old Russia. By Helen Acker. Illustrated by Zhenya Gay. Nelson, \$2.50

This new book about three great Russians appears at a time when teachers are discovering about our great ally. The lives of Tolstoy, Gorky, and Chaliapine, still widely honored today in the land of the Soviets, are briefly and simply told for young people of 10 years of age and older. Miss Acker portrays with particular effectiveness the birthplace of Tolstoy, Yasnaya Polyana, recently despoiled by Nazi invaders and partially restored by the Soviet government. The qualities of the Russian people are sympathetically drawn. The author, a Minnesota professor of current literature, whets young readers' appetites for the adult literature of Tolstoy and Gorky, and stirs admiration for the great Chaliapine. May there be many more such biographies as these!

Thunderbolt House. By Howard Pease. Illustrated by Armstrong Sperry. Doubleday, \$2.00

San Francisco in the year preceding the earthquake of 1906 was an unusual one for the Allen family, for Mrs. Allen inherited Thunderbolt House and they moved from Stockton to San Francisco. Jud's share of the fortune was his uncle's library which seemed to him a dull collection of old books until his father told him they were first editions of great value. The old house had its mysteries too: the death of Thunderbolt's son many years before, missing books, and mutilated copies of a book on San Francisco. Howard Pease adds some depth to the story by showing the effect of sudden wealth upon various members of the family. The book concludes with the earthquake and fire which destroyed so much of the city. The story moves swiftly, and will be welcomed by the boys who want an exciting story. Grades 6-10. J. G. S.

Peter the Great. By Nina B. Baker. Illustrated by Louis Slobodkin. Vanguard, \$2.50

Absorbing story interest, clear-cut portraiture and skillful integration of related history characterize, as in the author's Juarez, this latest book by a capable and creative biographer for children. Peter is presented in all his strength, vitality and passionate pursuit of his ambitions for Russia. All the people surrounding him are also made very real. As the Czar who introduced European customs into Russia, gave his country an outlet to the sea, began her navy and fought many wars against invading powers, his significance to-day is made apparent. This is more than a life of an individual; it is a piece of Russian history, much needed in children's literature. Authorities consulted have been listed. The book is enthusiastically recommended. A. J.

Dr. George Washington Carver, Scientist. By Shirley Graham and George D. Lipscomb. Illustrated by Elton C. Fax. Julian Messner, \$2.50

It is a humbling experience to read the life of this gentle genius and saint and at the same time to remember that a Christian college turned him away because of his color; that he had to ride a Jim Crow coach when he travelled to Washington on the invitation of a Congressional Committee; and that he and all other members of his race were denied the right of suffrage. It is humbling

also because his accomplishments in the face of unimaginable obstacles, his complete disdain for material wealth, and his extraordinary modesty by implication indict the distorted moral values of our culture.

Yet neither Carver himself nor this story of his life undertook to attack basic social injustices. Carver was a great scientist, a great man, but he was not a prophet in the Old Testament sense. And this book does not, except by indirection, raise questions of broad social importance. It is a straightforward, beautifully written, though not too well organized, biography of a remarkable scientist. The boys and girls (and adults, too) who read this book will be oblivious to the lure of baseball and radio thrillers until they have turned the last page.

This is a success story, but a convincing one. The little slave boy who was once "traded for a horse," and who lived to be sought out by heads of governments and scholars from all parts of the earth was not only a miracle-worker; he was in himself a miracle. For the memorable fact about George Washington Carver was not primarily his incredible scientific productivity but his own rare personality.

Story of George Gershwin. By David Ewen. Illustrated by Graham Bernbach. Holt, \$2.50

Music critic and friend of Gershwin's, the author is qualified to inform young people about Gershwin and his music. He proves himself also competent to engage their interest by a lively style. This is not distinguished biographical writing but neither is it merely anecdotal journalism. It does more than tell about an East Side boy's fabulous rise to wealth and eminence in the musical world. It describes the factors which brought about the jazz age in America and nourished such a musical genius as Gershwin while showing also how Gershwin in turn influenced jazz and the music of America. For older boys and girls with interest in music. A. J.

Lad of Lima. By Mary Fabyan Windeatt. Illustrated by Sister Jean, O. P. Sheed and Ward, \$1.75

This story of Martin de Porres, told with delicacy and charm for Catholic children,

should do much to strengthen the sense of brotherhood between Negro and white.

Disappearing Island. By Agnes M. R. Dunlop (Elizabeth Kyle, pseud.) Pictures by Marjorie Quennell. Houghton, \$2.00

A story of modern Scotland with the war theme very lightly touched. Two English children, Peter and Margot, came up from London for a summer holiday at a Scotch fishing village. Although the villagers were superstitious about Disappearing Island and would not discuss it, the children became convinced that it actually existed and that on it there was a little boy who had been kidnapped and who was believed to have been lost at sea. Their manoeuvring to reach the island, and the mystery and its solution are not too implausible to mar the story. The Scotch dialect is indicated through phrases and occasional words rather than through an attempt to capture it by variations in spelling. The book has a reassuring tranquillity and warmth and a feeling of permanence in the homely life of the cottages. There are moments of laughter, of mischief, of kindness and of adventure. Pleasant reading for both boys and girls. Grades 5-7. J. G. S.

Yankee Yarns; Stories from the Northeastern States. Compiled by Wilhelmina Harper. Illustrated by Nedda Walker. Dutton, \$2.50

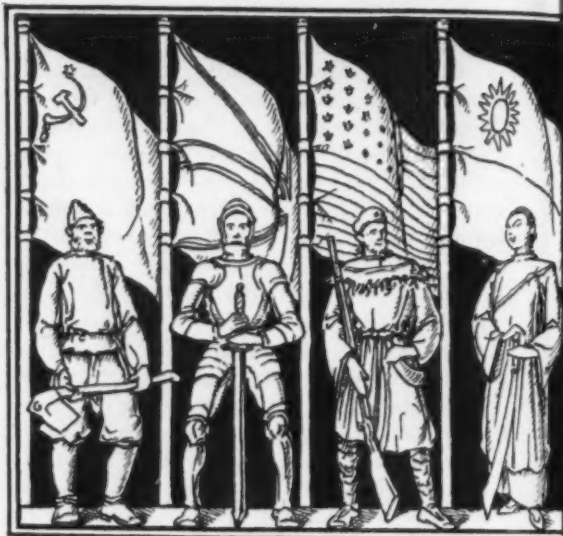
The title is a little misleading, for not all of the stories have the robust, imaginative quality which one expects of a yarn; indeed, many of them are very gentle tales. The use of a single chapter from a book as a short story is not always successful; but where this occurs, Miss Harper has chosen her material wisely so that it stands alone. The collection should be useful as correlated reading in the geography units, and many children will enjoy it just for the fun of reading. It should also provide good read aloud material for the teacher who shares books with her classes. Grades 5-8. J. G. S.

The Grasshopper Book. By Wilfred S. Bronson. Harcourt. \$1.75

A book about grasshoppers and their relatives—termites, ear-wigs, mantes, walking sticks, crickets, katydids. The context is illustrated with clever black and white diagrams and pictures. H. L.

Legends of the United Nations. By Frances Frost. (Whittlesey House) McGraw-Hill, \$2.50

A collection of stories built about such a theme might have accomplished one of two things: the adding of fresh material to the tales already in print, or the selection of the finest version of stories available. Unfortu-



Legends of the United Nations (McGraw-Hill)

nately it does neither. All of the stories have appeared in print, some in as many as twelve other sources. Then the compiler has taken the liberty of rewriting the quoted version. As a result, Irish, Russian, Chinese, even Br'er Wasp have lost their individuality and are reduced to a monotonous similarity of style. The worst example is that of Dick Whittington, which in the Lang edition is a stalwart, forthright story, but which in this collection is so emasculated that it emerges as a pretty little account of Dick who called his cat Thursday because on that day he found her crying at the edge of the forest. His unhappiness is so glossed over that his running away seems like childish petulance. A second example of the tampering with a quoted source occurs in *The Children of Lir* in which the quality of the Irish poetry is destroyed so that the author can prove she is capable of rhyming *shield* with *field*. Since the book achieves nothing except a title to appeal to the patriotic, it would seem wiser to let children read these stories in the sources from which the compiler drew them. J. G. S.

The Pageant of Canadian History. By Anne Merriman Peck. New York; Longmans, Green and Co. \$3.00

In Mrs. Peck's hands, the history of Canada (the country which Voltaire described as nothing but acres of snow) does truly become a pageant. Telling the story of Canada's growth must be particularly difficult, because there was not a steady westward movement, such as we had, but instead, separate developments breaking out here and there. It is Mrs. Peck's gift to make the places and people connected with these movements come to life. Emphasis is given to the Canada of today—its people, its position both in the British Commonwealth and outside, its internal problems, and its possibilities. Throughout runs an American author's generous appreciation of the neighbor to the north.

As for the accuracy of the historical facts, one Canadian authority, Stephen Leacock, has praised the book highly by saying that it is excellent and that for the general reader he knows of none better in the field. It is to be hoped that Mrs. Peck will hear of the thousand-dollar prize suggested by the American Consulate in Winnipeg and financed by citizens of this city, St. Paul, and Minneapolis, for the best combined Canadian and American history to be used in schools of both countries. The judges are to be selected from the history departments of the universities in the three prairie provinces and the three north central border states. The prize was announced in response to a toast to President Roosevelt at a banquet of the Winnipeg Burns Club honoring Lincoln's Birthday—a round of good will.

E. A. F.

Far From Marlborough Street. By Elizabeth Philbrook. Illustrated by Marjorie Torrey. Viking, \$2.00

It was unusual in 1793 for a proper little Boston girl to set out alone on a three-day stage-coach trip. The circumstances were unusual, too. It was necessary for Nancy Lee Wadsworth to take a very special box with its key to her Uncle Jonathan in Springfield. The spirit of the pioneers and sailors who were her ancestors carried her through strange and exciting adventures. Friendly and impetuous as she was, she always used her head.

Along with a good story there is a graphic description of travel conditions at the time

and the part that good roads have played in the development of this country. Little girls from nine to twelve will readily identify themselves with Nancy Lee and will also enjoy the attractive black and white illustrations by Marjorie Torrey.

D. E. S.

Custer: Fighter of the Plains. By Shannon Garst. Illustrated by Harve Stein. Messenger, \$2.50

This episodic biography for "middle-aged" boys shows George Armstrong Custer at the age of four deciding that he would be a soldier; then as a cadet graduating from West Point at the foot of his class; next at twenty-four the youngest general and a great Civil War leader; following peace, his experiences as Indian fighter in Kansas; and finally his last stand in the battle of the Little Big Horn where he lost his life but gained enduring fame. It is a swift-moving story that is in keeping with the restlessness of Custer's character. However, it is rather carelessly written, being repetitious and not always in the best idiom. Nor does it give the feel of the Western plains that one finds in *Boots and Saddles*, Mrs. Custer's account of the General's life after the Civil War. The black and white illustrations by Harve Stein are apt and vigorous. Some of the Indian heads are particularly well drawn.

D. E. S.

Animals, Plants, and Machines. By Lucy Sprague Mitchell and Margaret Wise Brown. Educational Consultant, Blanche Kent Verbeck. Illustrator, Clare Bice. "Our Growing World" Series. Heath, \$0.96

Children of approximately second grade reading ability are introduced to the world of science through narratives vigorous with suspense and drama. The attractive illustrations in color re-inforce the concepts developed in the text.

Come Soon, Tomorrow! The Story of a Young Singer. By Gladys Swarthout. Dodd, Mead, \$2.00

Emily Norton, gifted young mezzo-soprano, was born in Missouri, studied music in Chicago, New York, and in musical centers in Europe. Her story is written with the sure touch of one who knows the hard work and sacrifice necessary, even for one with a beautiful voice, to attain the goal of her dreams—

her debut at the Metropolitan Opera House. Girls in their early teens will respond to the glamour and romance, and better still, will realize the difficulties that stand in the way of ambition, and also the value of the happy companionship of an understanding mother.

D. E. S.

Plays of Democracy. Edited by Margaret Mayorga. Dodd, Mead. \$2.00

Fifteen plays—fourteen of them in one act—about modern democracy. Eight are based on the Four Freedoms, six on the Home Front. The longer play is about Abraham Lincoln. Miss Mayorga interprets democracy as the ability of people to understand each other and to show a little more gentle goodwill every day. Seven of the fifteen plays are royalty-free. All are suitable for high school production. It is a timely book that should be useful.

D. E. S.

Careers in Commercial Art. By J. I. Blegeleisen. Dutton. \$2.75

Among the types of commercial art considered in this intriguing volume are the making of advertising signs, showcard writing, lettering, bookjacket designing, magazine illustrating, poster making, textile designing, cartooning, animated picture making, tool designing, stage designing, and others.

Sierra Sally. By Eleanor Hoffman. Illustrated by Louis Lundeen. Nelson, 1944. \$2.00

Sierra Sally was a Palamino pony who lived on a California ranch. Palamino horses are noted for "their skin of silken gold and flaxen manes and tails." But Sierra Sally was different. It was said that her mother was deeply disappointed when she first saw that her colt's coat and tail were brown instead of gold. Perhaps it was because she was unlike the other colts that Sally longed to become an explorer instead of a cow pony. The story of how she achieved her ambition will be an adventure for the boy or girl who reads it. At the same time he will become acquainted with life on a modern super ranch. Delightful and worth while.

M. D. R.

The First Woman Doctor. The Story of Elizabeth Blackwell, M. D. Illustrated by Corrine Malvern. Julian Messner. \$2.50

Elizabeth Blackwell was a girl of determination. It is well that she had this quality, for without it she could never have become a doctor. Each step in her career called for the utmost courage, and yet she not only practiced medicine but innovated reforms which constitute best practice today. She wrote along lines of health education and preventive medicine, founded the first woman's hospital and school of nursing, and helped to establish battlefield nursing during the Civil War. This biography, which can be recommended highly to junior high school girls, is a story of achievement written with understanding and skill.

M. D. R.

Farm and City. By Lucy Sprague Mitchell and Margaret Wise Brown. Illustrated by Anne Fleur. Heath. \$0.88

This is the first book of a social studies series, "Our Growing World," which begins with simple family life and expands community concepts till it embraces the two Americas. *Farm and City* tells in delightful style the day-to-day experiences of Ben and Sally in the country, and their later visit to Sue and Tom, who live in a city skyscraper. The text is planned for first-grade readers, and is most beautifully illustrated with soft and richly colored drawings.

B. G. S.

Riding the Air. By Dorothy Judd Sickels. Illustrated by Ben Jorj Harris. American Book.

The story of aviation from the time of Icarus and his wings saved from the feathers of the sea-gull, to the air-planes of tomorrow, when travel by air will be the rule of the day. Some of the unusual content included is an introduction to global geography, weather maps as used in aviation, and the peace-time contributions of the airplane to our way of living. For intermediate grades.

B. G. S.

"WAR and EDUCATION"

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512 pages, black vellum, \$4.00

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